

"The Story of our Lives from Year to Year."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 1864.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER XLIV. THE PILGRIMS AT RANELAGH.

I DON'T know whether they allow strangers to dine at the P. in these days. I am rather inclined to think they do not. Ultra exclusiveness tends in the long run to inhospitality, and Spaniards, through whose miscrably shrivelled veins creeps the sangre azul, are sometimes reluctant to share their puchero with the best recommended stranger, fearful lest he should have less than ninety-seven quarterings on his scutcheon.

At all events, they dined outsiders at the P. twenty years since, and a very agreeable time the outsiders had of it. This may account for a certain round table in the Pilgrims' coffee-room being occupied on a certain evening in the winter of the sultan's sojourn in London, by four guests, only two of whom were free and accepted Pilgrims.

Members first, if you please. There was our old friend Lord Carlton, much older, but not much the worse for wear. He had settled down and grown fat. Need anything more be said? Well, a little, perhaps. He was married, and her ladyship modelled wax flowers beautifully, and illuminated scrolls with "Thou shalt not steal," and "The tongue is an unruly member," in gold and colours, for ragged schools, in most superb style. She was rather too serious to be the wife of a reformed rake, and was given to lamenting her destiny, and exclaiming against the ingratitude of the world, when the juvenile pickpockets whom she had converted morally to a state of grace, and physically to be foot-pages, turned out failures, and absconded with the spoons; or when the awakened returned transport, whom she had promoted to be butler, was detected handing a blue bag containing Lord Carlton's court sword (broken short off at the hilt), a church service bound in purple velvet and gold, a silver vinaigrette, and fourteen yards of Valenciennes lace, over the area railings to Mrs. Fence, of Middlesex-street, late Petticoat-lane, by condition a widow, and by predilection pursuing the vocation of receiver of stolen goods. Lord Carlton, however, went his way, and her ladyship went hers.

His lordship bought pictures that were not by

Titian, and, in his place in the House, was a very thorn in the side of the Royal Academicians and the Trustees of the National Gallery. He had brought in a bill to abolish whistling in the streets, and to compel costermongers to say "asparagus" instead of "grass," when they cried that delicious esculent for sale. This measure had a succès d'estime, for it absolutely got read a second time, by accident, on a very hot Goodwood Cup day; and it was only in committee, and by the advice of a right reverend prelate, who, as the rumour ran, was a distinguished amateur of sibilation, and the only bishop who could dress asparagus with oil and tarragon vinegar after the recipe of Marie Antoinette's Cardinal de Rohan, that his lordship withdrew the bill, which had fluttered the Volscians, and dreadfully alarmed the London butcher-boys and itinerant vegetarians. A good man was my Lord Carlton, after a tempestuous youth. He owed a good deal of money, but he also gave away a good deal; and if Peter was damned by his laches, Paul profited by his liberality. He went to sleep with commendable regularity at church, at the Opera, in the House—save when the whistling and green-stuff business was afoot—at the club, in the green-rooms of the patent theatres, in the committee-room of the Royal Hospital for Plica Polonica (that beneficent institution which we owe to the ever-to-be-lamented Dr. Quackenboss, and at whose anniversary festivals a royal duke generally takes the chair), and at the board meetings of the Elephant Life Assurance Association. Universally respected and beloved, a D.C.L., and lord-lieutenant in prospective of his county, Lord Carlton had probably little to wish for here below, save a little less gout, and a little more money to pay off his mortgages with. He had a literary turn, and had written a stinging article in a review, showing up would-be connoisseurs, who gave enormous sums for spurious Titians; and he was, just now, occupied in editing the family papers of the Carltons. As the first lord got his coronet through selling votes to Sir Robert Walpole, and the second earned a step in the peerage by selling votes to Mr. Pitt, and the third had cracked innumerable bottles with George the Fourth, much, very much was expected from the Carlton Papers.

And who was the second Pilgrim? Sir William Long. He was thinner, and paler, and looked taller, and men said his health

was failing him. His hair was slightly grizzled, he ate little and drank less; he had a cough; and he smoked even more persistently than of yore. He was unmarried. He had travelled considerably since we saw him last, and fully earned his status as a Pilgrim. He had been east, and brought home narghilés, papouches, and attar of roses; he had been west, and returned with buffalo robes and moctasins, the antlers of elks, and the tails of beavers. His hunting-lodge was hung with the scalps of the Hours he had killed; but he felt a little bored, even among the desiccated skull-caps of his slain enemies. They were dead; but what was he to do with the hours which were to come? He had become wealthier; but he spent little, so far as was known; drove, now, no four-in-hand; indulged in no elegant wickedness. The gossips whispered that the priests had got hold of him; that by his munificence had been endowed the new bishopric of Adrianopolis in partibus infidelium; that he had built the oratory of St. Gengulphus up in Northumberland; and that he would probably make an end of it as Brother Something or other, with peas in his shoes and spikes in his girdle. But you and I know what the whispers of the gossips are worth.

And the pair of guests? The Sultan Greyfaunt is before you. He was in his proper element: he was happy. The pearl of a washer-woman, and the jewel of a body-servant, had done all that was possible for him. The sultan had a contented mind, and had fully made that mind up on the important subject of himself.

The partie carrée at the round table was completed by Tom Tuttleshell. I wish to state that Tom has been dead (worthy soul!) these five years, and that his mantle has not descended upon anybody. There are a great many people going about the world who would like to be Tom Tuttleshell, *but they can't manage it*. Only one Tuttleshell can flourish in a generation, and the time of the next Tuttleshell has not come yet.

He was a florid little man, with such bright red hair and whiskers, such sparkling blue eyes, such gleaming white teeth, such a dazzling shirt collar, such mirror-like boots, and altogether in such a violent and inflammatory state of freshness, that he looked as though he had been boiled, starched, and mangled in a hurry. His hands were so ostentatiously clean, that you might have fancied (but that he was the most harmless fellow breathing) that he had been murdering somebody, and scrubbing his knuckles with a flesh-brush to get the blood off. In evening-dress he was superb, and wore the largest cleanest and stiffest white neckcloth to be seen out of a Wesleyan conference. In morning-dress his trousers were of so very large and pronounced a check as to give his legs the appearance of ambulatory draught-boards; and he wore, winter and summer, a white waistcoat, a black watch ribbon, and a white hat with a crape round it. I think that costume was the making of Tom. In it he was fit for any society. In that white waistcoat he had assisted at a ladies' committee (anti-slavery) in the gorgeous

saloons of Sennacherib House. Often you might see the white hat, and snowy vest, and the rubicund perspiring face between them, on platforms at public meetings, down the yard at Tattersall's, and in the lobbies of the Parliament House. They always let Tom into the Speaker's gallery of the Commons. I don't know why; but I conjecture in consequence of the hat and waistcoat. They looked so much as though they and their wearer had a right to go everywhere.

You met Tom Tuttleshell in all kinds of London penetralia, to the most exclusive. At the guard-mounting at St. James's you would find Tom in the centre of the hollow square, where the colours were, chatting to the dandy Guardsmen. At a review in Plumstead marshes, who was that individual in a white hat and waistcoat? Who was that bold civilian riding full split with the chief of the staff. That, by your leave, and by the chief's leave, too, who knows him, was Tom Tuttleshell. Tom was never in the commission of the peace—his commissions were of a very different nature—but you might behold him sitting on the bench, cheek by jowl with the Middlesex magistrates on licensing day. He was sure to turn up on the speech-days of the public schools, and at the collations afterwards. The swan-hopping excursions of the corporation of London; the term-feasts of the Honourable Society of Reynard's Inn (where you dined in a rusty black gown, drank hipposas, and were expected to drink, in Norman-French, to the health of the late Chief Justice Gascoigne); and especially the annual banquets of the Worshipful Company of Chain-mail Makers (nearly the last of the City companies who put five-pound notes under the plates of their guests, and cause their beadies to fill the hats of the company with macaroons and pine-apple jelly when they go away: such is the munificence of the Chain-mail Makers, whose Hall has not been rebuilt since the great fire, and whose paraphernalia is in the custody of the head waiter at the Star and Garter);—none of these festive gatherings would have been complete without the presence of Tom Tuttleshell. He sung so good a song, and told so good a story, that aldermen and baronets had been heard to regret, almost with tears in their eyes, that That Man was not something in the City, whereby he would infallibly have made his fortune. I believe that Tom *was* free of the Chain Makers, whose stock paid twenty-seven per cent, and that he lived upon his dividends. Others accounted for his means of livelihood by whispering the mysterious word "commission." It was certain that, although Tom was always ready to borrow forty thousand pounds—at seven and a half per cent, not a penny more—for the Earl of Liveloose, he never borrowed any money himself. You could not call him a sponge; for though he was continually being asked to dinner, he never asked to be asked. You had no right to brand him as a tuft-hunter, for he touched nobody, and made himself sought by, without seeking the company of, the great. The

malevolent, only, could hint, with a sneer, that Tom's mother must be a washerwoman and his father a cab proprietor, so very white and profuse was his linen, and so very frequently was he to be seen scurrying from the West-end to the City in a Hansom. Being a very little man, he naturally carried, at all places of public entertainment, a very big opera-glass: and it was highly edifying to watch him at the opera or the theatre, on the first night of a new dancer or a new play, apparently engaged in sighting a brace of Armstrong guns linked together. You could scarcely sweep the vista of the hill at Epsom or the grand stand at Ascot, without your eye lighting on Tom and the big opera-glass, sitting in the high places, or planted, Colossus of Rhodes-like, on the top of a four-in-hand. He went behind the scenes of all the theatres; and many a manager owed his temporary rescue from ruin to Tom Tuttleshell's friendly offices in the way of letting stalls and private boxes. He was free of a great many newspaper offices, and of a great many newspapers too, to judge from the neatly-folded and banded copies which were handed to him by bowing publishers when he took his weekly trot down the Strand every Saturday afternoon. He went frequently to Paris, and consorted with the best people there, both English and French. He was a confidential creature. When Sir John Brute, who adored his wife, and was in the habit of beating her black and blue, had been unusually obstreperous, her ladyship always called in Tom Tuttleshell, and he seldom failed to induce penitence in the heart of the offending husband. He had saved Mrs. Lightfoot from committing suicide, after the discovery by her jealous spouse of Captain Tenstun's miniature in her writing-case; and when Mrs. Majolica Potts threw the tea-things at her husband's head, and he retorted by casting china images at her, and the children, terrified by the quarrels of their parents, cast themselves in wild confusion down the nursery stairs, Tom was always called in to restore peace to that distracted household. Thus, welcome everywhere, and doing harm to no man, was Tom Tuttleshell. He was not literary; but had once written a song, in aid of the funds of a fancy fair, and dedicated by permission to Mrs. Hiram Hyem Higgs (great banking family). He was not artistic; yet was supposed to have a keen eye for the old masters, had once been examined as a witness before a Fine Art committee, and was absolutely alluded to in a Fine Art debate, when the report was brought up in the Commons, as "a gentleman of well-known taste." He was no great politician; but he was sure, at election-time, to be on the Conservative candidate's committee. He was neither financial nor commercial, though he was always very anxious about the price of consols, shook his head when Venezuelan bonds were mentioned, and had been seen in Upper Thames-street attentively regarding a sample of Patna rice in the outstretched palm of an eminent wholesale grocer. "I ask you, Tom, as a fellow who

knows what's what, if that's *rice*?" the grocer was heard to say. He was undeniably respectable; but nobody knew precisely where he lived. He was supposed to have a bedroom at an hotel in Jermyn-street, and chambers in Reynard's Inn, and an office in Gidcon-court, Sampson-lane, Cornhill. Yet, granting this slight amount of mystery, not a breath of suspicion rested on the fair fame of Tom Tuttleshell, for he had been seen lunching on turtle at Birch's with a governor of the Bank of England, and was currently reported to have an audience with the prime minister every morning, when the pilot who guided the ship of state was engaged in the pleasant occupation of shaving. These things become known, and do a man good.

The Pilgrims' dinner had reached that agreeable stage when men begin to trifle with the cates before them; to be critical about the wine; biscuits they nibble; to inspect contemptively the chequers in their Madras napkins; to be deeply interested in the hinges of their nut-crackers, to peer curiously into the shells of their filberts, and when they find a withered one to utter a fat sigh, half in the complacency of processive digestion, and half as though they were reflecting: "Such is life:"—then to whisk imaginary crumbs from off their knees; then to pull their wristbands and adjust their collars; then to find more flavour in the Chambertin—"A very delicate, yet sound wine, Tuttleshell!" "I wish I had a quarter cask of it, my lord"—than ever the wine-merchant put into it; then to admit that, after all, the old Saxon families surpass the so-called Norman race in purity of blood and antiquity of lineage. "I would rather be Cedric the Saxon than Philippe de Malvoisin," says Lord Carleton, finding two beeswings in his port instead of none: to which Tom Tuttleshell, whose grandfather was the Lord knows whom, cheerfully assents; and, finally to yawn, and to think that a mild cigar and a glass of Seltzer with something in it, would be about the summum bonum of human felicity. Don't let me hear you say that there are few hours of unmixed happiness in life, or repeat that trash, that man never is but always to be blest. Man is blest when he is asked to dine at the Pilgrims'. The chef would inpale himself on his own spit if he heard that any one had been compelled to take carbonate of soda after one of his dinners; the cellar is so good that there is not a headache in the whole of it; and black care never sits behind the horseman who puts his legs in the mahogany stirrups of that friendly club. No British wife is ever angry with her husband for being bidden to dine at the Pilgrims'; precisely as no British husband (save a monster) would deny his wife a cheque if she were about to be presented at court, and lacked jewellery or lace.

"But the question is," said Lord Carleton, as they rose from table in beaming mood; "the question is, where shall we go?"

"Strangers can't play cards," remarked Sir William Long.

"Hate cards," added Lord Carleton.

"They are stupid things at best," observed the sultan, loftily. "Give me hazard."

The baronet looked at him. "You must have oceans of money, Mr. Greyaunt," he observed.

"Not much, but enough," Edgar replied, with something akin to a blush.

"I am glad to hear it. People call me rich; yet I daren't play at hazard."

"You played too much when you were young, Long," his lordship, who was conscious that Edgar was not very well pleased with the remark, interposed. "Greyaunt will soon have enough of hazard. It's like rowing. When a fellow begins to know something about it, it's time for him to leave it off. But still, all this by no means helps us to settle the question, 'Where shall we go?'"

"I shall go home," Sir William Long said, wearily.

"You've no home to go to, most misanthropic bachelor, except those dreary chambers in the Albany, where you bury yourself to smoke cigars twenty times too strong for you, and read Crebillon the Younger, or Butler's Lives of the Saints. Why on earth don't you fall in love and marry?"

"I never was in love but once," the baronet made answer, gravely, "and that was with a little girl scarcely nine years old. I don't think I could marry her; for I am grey and broken, now; and she must be a young woman by this time."

"Was the attachment reciprocal?"

"I think so. I never saw her but once in my life; but I gave her some sugar-plums, and she let me kiss her at parting."

"What was her christian name — sans indiscretion?"

"Lily."

Edgar Greyaunt pricked up his ears. "Why, I knew a little girl called Lily," he cried, "and not so long ago, either."

"Not such a very uncommon name," yawned Lord Carleton.

"My aunt adopted a poor relation," put in Thomas Tuttleshell, "whose name was Hannah; but she was a sentimental woman was my aunt, and changed the girl's name to Lily."

"A most interesting piece of family history," sneered his highness, who disliked, he scarcely knew why, the universally popular Thomas. "Have you many poor relations, Mr. Tuttleshell?"

"Plenty," answered Tom, cheerfully. "The very poorest of my poor relations has had the honour of making a fourth at a very pleasant dinner-party at the Pilgrims' Club, Park-lane, this very evening." Hereby Tom managed to kill two birds with one stone; to give Greyaunt a Rowland for his Oliver; and to pay Lord Carleton, who was the Amphitryon, a neat little compliment. Yet the good fellow winced somewhat as he replied to the young man. He knew all about Mr. Edgar Greyaunt. "Why should that brainless puppy insult me?" he thought. "Here's a peer of the realm and a rich baronet. *They*

never say anything rude to me; yet here's a stuck-up young jackanapes, who's burning the candle at both ends, and in six months won't have a penny of his old aunt's money, has never a civil word to throw at Tom Tuttleshell. Well: it don't much matter. *He'll* never get on." Tom never bore malice; and to prophesy that a man would never get on, was the severest censure he ever passed on the conduct of an enemy.

"The question," resumed Lord Carleton, anxious to put an end to an embarrassing discussion, "again resolves itself into, 'Where shall we go?'"

They were donning their great-coats in the hall.

"Come home and smoke with me," suggested the baronet.

"We will smoke, and not go home with thee, hermit of the passage between Piccadilly and Burlington-gardens," thus Lord Carleton. "We know how it would end. Three o'clock in the morning, a discussion on the Cosmic Principle in Nature; Greyaunt losing his temper, and challenging us all to fight duels before breakfast; nervous affections brought on by excessive indulgence in tobacco; and Tom Tuttleshell asleep with his head in the coal-scuttle."

"Come and play lansquenet at my rooms," proposed the sultan. He knew that Tom never played, and would go away (which was the very thing he wanted) if the invitation were accepted; and he would have been delighted to entertain a peer and a baronet, even if he lost money to them.

"Long has forsworn lansquenet, and I prefer whist," objected his lordship. "Can no one propose something else?"

"Why, there are plenty of places to go to," said Thomas, who saw that his peculiar office was now in request, but who had prudently bided his time until the invention of his superiors was exhausted. You must not be obtrusive with the lion, even if you be a jackal. Wait until King Noble begins to scratch his mane with a puzzled air, and turns an inquiring eye towards you. Then you may hint to his majesty, but very discreetly, where you think the nicest antelope is to be found.

"Places to while away an hour positively abound," pursued the diplomatic Thomas. "Will you take a cab down to Pentonville, and see the Grecian? A monstrous queer place, I can assure you. I took an English duke and the Hospodar of Moldavia (who insisted on wearing a false nose, thinking there was a masquerade) there one night, and they enjoyed themselves immensely. Don't care about going so far? Will you be my guests at a humble little club in Frith-street, Soho? It is club night. Brattles will be in the chair. You know Brattles, the well-known sculptor of Satan putting on the Serpent's Skin. There will be some capital singing, and you'll meet some of the first wits of the day. I'll introduce you all as Manchester men, if Mr. Greyaunt chooses to hide his artistic candle under a bushel."

"I should like to go very much indeed," said Sir William Long.

The Sultan Greyfaunt demurred, on the plea that they would probably be bored. The sultan would have dearly liked to strangle Tom Tuttle-shell for that ill-timed allusion to his artistic genius.

"Try again, Tom," said Lord Carleton, who was thinking what her serious ladyship would say if she even heard of the expediency of visiting these wild haunts of dissipation being mooted.

"Well, there's Evans's; but it's too early. There's a new farce at the Lyceum—Potatoes and Pool, or the Can and the Cannon Game; but I know the French piece, and the man who has done it into English; and both are stupid. What do you say to a visit to Ranelagh?"

"Ranelagh! why I haven't been there for ten years!" exclaimed Sir William.

"Ranelagh! Why it's mid-winter, and as cold as charity," said Lord Carleton.

"Where is Ranelagh?" asked the Sultan Greyfaunt, with engaging simplicity.

"Southwark Bridge-road, half a mile from the Asylum for Club-foot; two-shilling cab fare," rapidly pursued Thomas. "As to its being winter, that will be just the fun of it. M'Variety, the manager, who took the lease when poor Benjamin Raphael went to the bad, and who is a fellow of infinite resources, was the first man to hit on the ingenious notion of opening Ranelagh in winter. The statues in the Archipelaguan walk are covered up with straw, it is true, but they're beautifully lighted. The trees are leafless, but there's no end to the additional lamps. There's an artificial skating-pond, and a Galop Infernal on skates, with a full band, at ten o'clock. The lake's boarded over, and the Panorama of Seringapatam has been turned into Moscow at the time of the French invasion. It will be set on fire punctually at eleven; and Baudoucci, the great gymnast, dressed as the Emperor Napoleon, will cross from the Kremlin to the Church of St. Ivan on the tight rope, and in the midst of a shower of fireworks."

"Accomplished Tom, you speak like a book," said Lord Carleton.

"Or a play-bill," good-naturedly suggested Mr. Greyfaunt.

"You're not far wrong there," returned Thomas, with a dry laugh, "for I help M'Variety (who is an old ally of mine) every week to make out his programmes. Come, my lords and gentlemen. Shall it be Ranelagh? The price of admission has been reduced from half-a-crown to one shilling. There are a concert-room, a dancing pavilion, an exhibition of waxworks direct from Paris, and the property of the celebrated Florentine anatomical artist Signor Ventimillioni. There are the Wolocirini family—the Bounding Brothers of the Western Prairies; there is a ballet-theatre; and finally there is a circus, where Madame Ernestine, the celebrated equestrian, is to make her first appearance this very night on her trained charger Constant, dressé à la haute école, the bills say, although

what that may be I have not the slightest notion. We shall be just in time to see her."

"Constant! that's an odd name for a horse. Poor Frank Blunt—Griffin Blunt they used to call him: he came to a sorry end in Paris the other day—used to have a man called Constant. Deuced clever fellow he was, too. Dressed hair and made curaçao punch wonderfully. Robbed his master, I dare say. No, I think Blunt must have robbed him. A shocking rip was Frank, poor fellow."

"There is a man called Constant who keeps Pomeroy's Hotel, where I stayed when I came to town," Edgar remarked, in reply to Lord Carleton. The nobleman had sent away his brougham, and the baronet his cab, which were waiting at the club door, by this time; and the distinguished quartet, ensconced in a humble four-wheeled cab, were on their way to the famous gardens of Ranelagh. "I wonder whether it's the same Constant? These valets often save money and set up hotels."

"There is a river in Macedon, and there is a river in Monmouth," observed Sir William Long, "and I can't see what your Constant or anybody's Constant has to do with the lady's horse at Ranelagh. I wonder who this Madame Ernestine is? These horse-riding women change their names so often. I know there is one of them whom I should like to find."

A QUARTETTE PARTY IN MEADOW-ROW.

THERE was very little music among the worthies of South Cove in my childish days. A few wheezy pianos vegetated here and there, dusty and untuned, in their pleasant parlours; but it was very rare, as one passed before the open windows, to hear even the feeble little tweedlings of the Downfall of Paris, or the Garland of Love, which did duty at South Cove for melody, tapped out gingerly with incoherent gaps in the time. It was very natural, therefore, that Godpapa Vance, in right of his many thick volumes of marble-covered sonatas, and his peerless violoncello, should have taken his unquestioned seat in the musical world of South Cove as the Magnus Apollo of a rather shabby Parnassus.

Now and then, as behoved him, he would give a quartette party, a select gathering—so select that generally no one besides the players was invited, except the two Miss Standiforths, maiden sisters of the Reverend Julius Standiforth the second violin, and Madame Huillier the mother of the tenor player, a worthy little French master, who had settled down upon the small teaching there was to be found in South Cove, upon which he managed sparingly to support the old lady and himself.

The important part of first violin was always taken by Mr. Daley, who was, I believe, a fellow of some college at Cambridge, and was said to be rich, and of a good Cumberland family. Mr. Daley had long lived in retirement at the Cove

for the benefit of his health, people said, though no one seemed to know the nature of his ailments, nor greatly to believe in their existence. I remember he was a large shuffling square-shouldered man, red complexioned, and with hard high-rigged features, which the spinsters of the South Cove society called "a fine Roman outline." His clothes always seemed to me very glossy and black, but wondrously roomy and shapeless; the coat sleeves in particular scarcely showing more than the ends of his dumpty freckled fingers, which, before tuning his violin, he was in the habit of twisting and straining backwards and forwards—I suppose to twist a little suppleness into them—in an ungainly fashion, which made my hands ache as I looked at him.

Mr. Daley was not without some notions of music, and might have borne his part in the quartettes creditably enough but for a besetting fancy he had that he was, owing to some hidden disease, gradually expanding in person, and that he should soon inevitably overpass the utmost dimensions of every-day humanity; for which reasons, I suppose, he providently had his coats made very large. But this persecuting mania would seize upon the poor man at the most inconvenient times and places; in the midst of a psalm at church, for instance, or an intricate minuet of Haydn, and then he would fling down his prayer-book or fiddlestick, as the case might be, and, throwing himself back with closed eyes and outspread fingers, inflate his ruddy cheeks with an "Ough! ough!" which was evidently meant to express his perilously bloated condition, but which made a rather inopportune interruption to the musical performance.

The Reverend Julius Standiforth was a fair tall weak-eyed slip of a man; kindly and inoffensive, and always absorbed in the study of seaweeds during the first years of my acquaintance with him, though he subsequently dropped the seaweeds and took to infusoria. His playing was thin and timid, like himself; the tune rickety, and the tune washy and uncertain.

His two maiden sisters were excellent, hard-visaged, sturdy spinsters; curiously like each other and unlike him, with severe curled fronts, strongly-marked grey eyebrows, and figures of which the waists were very high under the arms, and the skirts very straight up and down, so that they looked like old babies in long-clothes. They adored their delicate near-sighted brother; and, besides making an idol of him, were helpful to all the poor—and the rich too, if they needed it.

Little Monsieur Huillier—we children, like most of the South Cove folks, persisted in calling him Mr. Howly, seeing that his name was hard to pronounce—played as he lived; primly, correctly, drily enough; with a somewhat nasal puritanical tone, which ran in his blood, perhaps, for his great-grand-parents had been persecuted Huguenots at La Rochelle, and he himself had something of the æsthetic in his belief and practice. Still, he was by far the most reliable of the

quartette party, and the only one who managed to keep them in any measure together in the sauequipent of a fugue, or an allegro con spirito.

Old Madame Huillier was a well-mannered, rather taciturn body, with a bass voice, twinkling black eyes, and something of a moustache on her upper lip. Her gowns were always brown, and her gloves brown, and her full-bordered mob-caps were not tied under the chin, but tightened round the head with a broad band and bow of brown ribbon. She was a great and skilful knitter, a great compounder of cooling drinks and potions from our country simples, and altogether a good sort of woman; but the people of South Cove never thoroughly took to her, owing, I fancy, to a rumour of her having been seen, in the first days of her stay in the place, gathering snails in a hand-basket, for the purpose, it was said, of converting them into jelly.

Godpapa Vance and his beloved Anati violoncello made the fourth at the natty mahogany quartette desk. The violoncello was a beautiful instrument, rich and melodious, with what Aunt Bella used to call *brown relict* notes in the lower part of its scale, and silvery ringing upper tones like the piping of a nightingale. But it needed a stronger and more skilful hand than godpapa's to draw out its full merits; for, despite all dear Aunt Bella's idolatrous reverence for his musical gifts, I am pretty sure they were very mediocre, and far inferior to her own. Yet the great love of her life dazzled her judgment with regard to this, as well as his other capacities. He would maunder over the strings for hours every day for a week before the quartette meeting, in the attempt to master the tune of some intricate passage; and often, through the closed door of the study, I have heard his muttered counting of the bars he had to rest while he eked out the rhythm by little taps with his bow, and came in again with a grunt; as it might be, thus: "one;" tap, tap, "two;" tap, tap, "three;" tap, "twang, twa-ang!" And when, on the quartette evening, he managed somehow to shamble through his part—faintly and fecklessly I irreverently thought, like a captive father-longlegs scrambling up and down a window-pane—who so proud as Aunt Bella? I declare I have seen her plump brown cheek mantle on such occasions with the conscious love and pride of eighteen in the triumph of the beloved.

Of course, I was not admitted to the honour of making one of the listeners to the quartettes in Meadow-row till long after the date of those first baby remembrances of mine above recorded. But there was little change in the performers or the performance during all the years in which the meetings took place. Mr. Daley gradually became more and more subject to be seized, at such times, with his fits of "chronic dilation," on which account Aunt Bella sagaciously substituted anchovy toast for certain rich and indigestible dainties called ramakins, which had wont to be served hot for supper after the music; and the younger Miss Standiforth, Miss Angelica, caught a chill and died out of her quiet

nook by the fireside into a quiet green nest in the quaint old graveyard; but I remember no other alteration in the matter or manner of those quartette meetings.

Shall I ever forget the evening!—a heavy summer evening, with sultry steel-grey clouds and thunder in the air—when the Rev. Julius brought in the manuscript copy of a quartette by Spohr, a present to him from a Nuremberg doctor of music, with whom a community of infusoria-loving pursuits had made him acquainted. On this eventful evening the new quartette was to be tried over by the strength of the company, not one of whom, I fancy, had ever heard a note of the composer's intricate music before.

Tea was on the table when the Reverend Julius made his appearance at the door with a corpulent roll of music in his hand. Aunt Bella and the surviving Miss Standiforth, Miss Rosetta, were occupied in dispensing it. Madame Huillier stood at the matchless backgammon table, close to the lamp, bobbing the brown bow on her cap up and down like the crest of a Friesland hen drinking, while she was engaged in a fierce tussle with a knot in her knitting. The three dilettanti were standing near the sofa, cup in hand, discussing a question of meteorology, in which godpapa was considered a ponderous authority; and I was lounging near the window, watching the pale lightning of the approaching storm throwing out the rugged black silhouette of Stony Point.

"Good evening, Mrs. Vance. Your servant, ladies," said Mr. Standiforth, awkwardly offering the roll instead of his right hand, and then sheepishly reddening as he shifted it to the other. Then, shaking hands with the trio of gentlemen, "Here is the famous quartette," said he. "Kanzler assures me"—Kanzler was the German infusoria-hunter—"that it is one of Spohr's easiest." And then he sidled into a chair, and was supplied by his watchful sister with a steaming cup, and plenty of buttered tea-cake. Godpapa took the manuscript; unrolled the parts and began flattening them backward with both hands, but without looking at the music; for he had just been plaintively holding forth on a theme of paramount interest to him, and he could not leave it quite yet.

"My tables," said he, intent on enlightening little Monsieur Huillier, who nodded affirmatively at every pause, with his mouth full of bread-and-butter—"my meteorological tables prove beyond doubt that the variations from the mean temperature during the last six weeks exceed those of any other summer since 'ninety-seven. The chances, therefore, you see, in favour of pleurisy, catarrh, and inflammatory sore-throat"—here he gave his lips a sort of smack indicative of relish for the diseases in question—"are sixteen and seven-eighths per cent greater than in the autumn months; and so, as I was saying, temperature is everything—equable temperature—and it is not one man in fifty-eight and a quarter who—"

"I don't believe temperature has anything to do with it; at least, I'm sure not in my case," broke

in Mr. Daley. "Say I go to bed—well; that is, to all appearance well, you know; I sleep my eight hours—eight and a half, maybe; get up seemingly—well; dress and take my little light breakfast as usual; none of your heavy beef-steaks or cutlets, merely a rusk and a cup of chocolate, and a morsel of marinated fish to drive it down."

"So much poison, so much poison, my good friend!" ejaculated godpapa, solemnly.

"Well! I take up my book or my violin for an hour, when all of a sudden—down it comes upon me—preslo! like a shot! I get a tingling here, and a creeping there, and I swell, and swell, and swell, till my very waistcoat-buttons fly off—or would, if I did not unfasten them; and pray, what has temperature to do with that?"

"What you have said," replied godpapa, "only proves an unpardonable degree of negligence with regard to diet; and also, no doubt, a tendency, a very well-defined tendency, to—the primary symptoms of—"

"Chronic dilation," murmured Mr. Daley, straightening out his fingers one after another.

"No. I forget the name. Bella! remind me to look into Carver's book to-morrow." (This was said in a parenthesis.) "I myself," said godpapa, with a sort of mournful pride in his own dilapidated condition, "have felt something of what you describe. Only yesterday, half an hour before dinner, I experienced that painful, distressing, muscular agitation—you call it dilation, but it's all one—which one feels especially in the arms and legs."

"A species of the feedgets, is it not, Monsieur le Capitaine?" quoth Madame Huillier, very gravely, in her bass voice. She had seen much of real sickness and suffering in her day, and I think was apt to pooh-pooh, as far as she dared, the valetudinarian lamentations which she so constantly heard. "Make three times the turn of your chamber, Monsieur le Capitaine," continued she, "drink a glass of water, and I answer you will cure of it."

Godpapa looked at madame over his shoulder crustily enough, while his fellow hypochondriac indulged in a furtive smile of intense satisfaction, under cover of the grimace occasioned by an extra contortion of his finger-joints. Prudent Monsieur Huillier hastily huddled up his mother's slip of the tongue, and turned the conversation, by asking Captain Vance to permit him to look at the new music.

"Oh, to be sure! Of course!" grumbled godpapa, and handed him the tenor part. With this he betook himself to a chair at the corner of the tea-table, close to the bread-and-butter dish, and there with knitted brows he coned it over, munching the while, and silently running over the fingering on the edge of the table. Then the other two gentlemen approached the tea-tray to have their cups replenished, and Aunt Bella, looking up smiling at godpapa, saw with half a glance that some untoward and ill-timed cloud had obscured her sun, though her own avocations and Miss Standiforth's talk had prevented her hearing the old Frenchwoman's

sarcastic recipe, who never drank tea, and therefore kept her place at the other side of the room.

"Captain Vance," said Aunt Bella, as he stood swinging his eye-glass moodily by its black ribbon, a sure sign of squally weather in Meadow-row—"Captain Vance, my dear. You have never told Mr. Standiforth of the *Pholax* you found the other day on the Holt rocks. He is so anxious to hear all about it, that I have been trying to describe what a rare *Pholax* it was, but you will do it so much better."

Poor dear Aunt Bella, in her anxiety to find a topic which might chase away the clouds, had transgressed her usual wise rule of never meddling with the 'ologies, and having been called upon a day or two before to admire the wonders of a specimen of the *Pholas parvus*, a small sallow shell with a bulb at one end of it, which godpapa had, with infinite labour, poked out of its hole in the rock—*Pholases* being just then his beloved hobby—she had adventured upon the scientific name for once in a way, and stumbled into a wrong termination, upon which the captain pounced down like a kite.

"Pho—las, Mrs. Vance!" cried the outraged conchologist, with an angry emphasis which made us all look up; and then he turned to Mr. Standiforth, exclaiming, "Cot, sir!"—which was with him the nearest approach to swearing—"why won't women leave Latin names alone, and stick to their cookery-books?"

Mr. Standiforth answered only by a nervous little titter; but he conjured away the storm notwithstanding, by professing so eager a desire to see the testacean prodigy, that godpapa could not in courtesy refuse to escort him into the study, while Aunt Bella, hanging her head very like a chidden child, muttered submissively to Miss Rosetta and the tea-cups:

"Dear, dear! How stupid of me to think it ended in x. And yet I know he *did* show me something that day that ended in x. What was it now? Ah! I recollect—a rose-bug—he was vexed at my calling it so, and said it was a *Cimex*. I was sure it ended in x; but, dear, dear! no wonder he was put out!"

In a few minutes the two naturalists returned; the parts were duly distributed on the stand, Mr. Daley gave his fingers a last vicious twist, preparatory to unlocking his violin-case. The precious *Anat*i was lifted out of its box like a musical nummy, carefully divested of its flannel shroud, and godpapa, seating himself, bow in hand, added his quota to the hideous din of tortured shrieks and groans which the four instruments emitted in the tuning, and which Mr. Standiforth in particular always prolonged and recapitulated, to the maddening of the audience, and was invariably half a tone flatter than the others after all.

All this time the thunder-storm had been creeping higher and higher,

In dull hot scales of serpent grey,

above the rocks and bushes of the opposite hill. The rising storm-wind threw capricious dashes of rain against the glass, and in the pause

before the riot of tuning began, a deep distant growl sounded over the sea.

Madame Huillier came out of her corner as she heard it, and sat down beside Aunt Bella. A dread of thunder-storms was, I do believe, the good lady's only touch of cowardice. In all else her moustache and her bass voice were not belied by any petty weakness, though she made no boast of her courage. I have seen her hold upon her lap quietly and tenderly, but quite firmly, the poor quivering struggling lumb of a young child whose ankle-joint had just been run over, while the surgeons set the bone, and I know she has sat by the bedside of a patient dying of scarlet fever, when all save the mother held aloof for fear of infection. But the sound of a moderate thunder-clap seemed to change her whole nature, and startle her into a superstitious agitation which I can only explain by surmising, that it may have found some echo in the terrors of her hard, bitter, Calvinistic creed. Some haunting dread of the inexorable judgments and visitations of her God of Wrath was, I doubt not, at the bottom of the old Frenchwoman's overweening trepidation. If she had been a Catholic, madame would have crossed herself, and said, "*Ora pro nobis*." As she was not, she drew nearer to the other two ladies, moved her lips nervously, and lost the count of her stitches.

"Ah!" said godpapa, tapping the page with the point of his bow. "Three crochets in a bar. Largo. That's well! Now, gentlemen!" And off they set, and, for a few bars, they seemed quite astounded at their own prowess. Aunt Bella ejaculated audibly that it was "vastly fine." By degrees, however, Mr. Standiforth and godpapa began to lag behind. For Mr. Standiforth stuck fast for a second or so at some double notes of which he could not compass the fingering, and then giving them up as a bad job, skipped them and went on, just a bar too late to join his fellow labourers; while godpapa charged manfully at a solo passage—Monsieur Huillier's dry, correct tenor supporting—and when he found it too intricate for his fingers, lapsed into his favourite, "one, two, twang! twang! two, three!" mumbled in an under tone; and so shambled onwards in the rear as best he could.

It was well that a rattling peal of thunder, which seemed nearly overhead, and made madame plant her elbows firmly on the table and her hands on her ears, covered the ravelled-out close of that sorely misused largo; of which I only remember that towards the end it broke into a playful andante movement, and that Mr. Standiforth, in a miz-maze, rested his violin on his knee and stared helplessly at the paper, while godpapa, who flattered himself he had caught up his companions at last, and nothing heeded the long-drawn chords which announced their arrival at the end, still continued his persistent little feeble twang! twang! all by himself, till the hoarse roar of the thunder extinguished him, not a little to the listeners' satisfaction.

There was an attempt made, I recollect, to perform the allegro capriccioso, with its intricate harmonics and restless changes of time at intervals of a few bars each. But, as might be supposed, the effect produced resembled no earthly combination of stringed instruments, but rather a confused Babel of squeaking, groaning, buzzing, and croaking, wherein all seemed equally lost, and godpapa distinguished himself in the daddy-longlegs movement before mentioned. Miss Rosetta was seized with a fit of opportune coughing; I plunged my face into the great china-bowl of pinks; and even dear Aunt Bella was fain to go to the window and look out at the lightning. To the relief of all present, Mr. Daley dropped his instrument with a crash, as another grand peal of thunder came rattling down the valley, and flinging himself back with closed eyes, ejaculated, "Ough! ough! Swelling—swelling every moment!" Thus ended Spohr's celebrated quartette, as performed in Meadow-row. The conscientious second violin, the glistly tip of whose nose, combined with the pink framework of his eyes, gave him, I thought, more than ever the look of the fish called a gurnet, still sat hunched up opposite to his portion of the desk, tracing with the point of his bow the black ups and downs of the demi-semiquavers, and muttering to himself, "A perfect waistcoat pattern! Diabolical stuff! What *could* that fellow Kanizler mean!"

BOUQUETS.

FEASTS, fêtes, and flowers, go well together. They naturally intertwine and amalgamate, both literally and alliterately. When our first parents entertained their angelic guest in the garden of Eden,

to the sylvan lodge

They came, that like Pomona's abour smiled,

With flowerets decked, and fragrant smells.

Whilst Eve, after serving her dinner,

then strews the ground

With rose and odours from the shrub unfumed.

At festive seasons, when flowers are rare, we substitute for them their precursors, leaves; or their successors, fruits and berries. Our friends at the antipodes, whose Christmas falls at midsummer, gladly garnish their rooms with brilliant bouquets, although they retain a lingering fondness for our native winter decorations, composed of holly, ivy, and mistletoe.

Flowers are plants arrived at their perfect state, their climax of existence. There is one plant which is all flower, and nothing else. Many flowers have no leaves, whose office is filled by the stalk or stem. But, in truth, we habitually employ the term "flower" synecdochally, i.e. taking the part for the whole. "Fond of flowers" really means fond of flower-producing plants. A flower-market is a place where plants which furnish flowers are sold. A non-flowering plant, like a naughty schoolboy, is sent down by learned doctors to the bottom of

its class, to take its place with mould and mustinesses. It is stigmatised with the title of cryptogam, which may be interpreted "sneak," and is disowned by its nobler vegetable relations. The most delicate and wholesome of vegetables are edible and potable flowers—the curious cauliflower, cherished of Pompey the Great; the hardier broccoli; the anti-rheumatic artichoke; the caper, coupled with boiled leg of mutton; the nasturtium and horage, to crown the salad-bowl; the hop, yielding its perfume to Allsopp's ale; the cowslip, consenting to be smothered in cream; the fever-chasing camomile, and the calmative lime-blossom.

Bouquets, in their strict sense, are flowers in combination, tied in a bunch, married together for better for worse, the tall with the short, the bright with the dull, the pretty with the plain, and proving, as in other unions, if not exactly that extremes meet, certainly that contraries go well together. The word bouquet is derived from boscetum; but the parent stands greatly in need of a certificate of legitimacy. Our "nosegay" (pronounced by our French friends "nosey-gay") is of less disputed origin, as well as a better thing in itself; because, in order to cheer our nasal organs, it must be composed of sweet-smelling flowers. Whether they be what Lord Bacon calls "flowers fast of their smells (as roses, damask and red), so that you may walk by a whole row of them and find nothing of their sweetness, yea though it be in a morning's dew;" or whether they be "the flowers and plants that do best perfume the air—that which, above all others, yields the sweetest smell in the air, is the violet; especially the white double violet, which comes twice a year, about the middle of April, and about Bartholomew-tide"—certain it is that nosegay flowers ought to be pleasant to the nose. Whereas "bouquet" is much wider in its significance, and may be taken to mean merely and loosely a bunch. A bunch of nettles, therefore, may be called a bouquet; but you can hardly call a bunch of nettles a nosegay.

Cooks style the bunch of sweet herbs (marjoram, thyme, parsley, chervil, &c.) with which they flavour their soups and stews, a bouquet. When a gentleman's beard is uneven and irregular, being made up of bald places and tufts of hair, it is said to grow in bouquets. A bouquet, in fireworks, is a number of pieces—rockets, Roman candles, serpents, crackers, squibs—let off at once so as to form a sheaf of sparkling fire, and is mostly the conclusion of the display. Generally speaking, to reserve anything for the bouquet, is to reserve it for the end of an entertainment. Figuratively, following out the nosegay idea, the bouquet of wine is the peculiar perfume and aroma which distinguishes it from other wines. In France, it is usual to present one's friends with a nosegay on their fête-day; for this, a copy of verses is sometimes substituted, which is thence entitled a bouquet. Lastly, when horse-dealers take a nag to market, they tie a bouquet of straw to its tail or its ear. Consequently, a horse to sell is said to have or

of a bouquet—of which our broom, on sale, is the ironical representative. And—most ungallant expression—a young lady open to an offer of marriage, is said to wear a bouquet on her ear.

The modern bouquet is a novel application of the materials composing the flowery crowns and garlands of the ancients, the use of which, saith Sir Thomas Browne, “is of no slender antiquity, and higher than I conceive you apprehend it.” Like them, they are either gestatory, such as they wore about their heads and necks; portatory, such as they carried at solemn festivals; pensile or suspensory, such as they hung about the posts of their houses; or else they are depository, such as they laid upon the graves and monuments of the dead. They are also “made up after all ways of art, compactile, sutile, plectile, for which work there were *στεφανολογοι*, or expert persons, to contrive them after the best grace and propriety.”

Bouquets may be ranged in two great divisions, the artistical or picturesque, and the regular and formal. The first belongs to the painter's art, the second trenches on the jeweller's. It is a mosaic of petaloid gems. Picturesque bouquets, again, may be subdivided into bouquets with backs—bouquets to be placed against a wall, with all their flowers and foliage facing one way; and round bouquets, to stand in the centre of a room or table, and which must show a goodly countenance in whichever direction they are beheld. These stand at the head of their class; they are works of high art; their composition requires a touch of genius. Their successful and satisfactory putting together demands an eye for symmetry of form and harmony of colour, besides architectural and engineering skill, to render the edifice firm on its basis, and secure from the dangers of unstable equilibrium.

For these large monumental bouquets an additional talent is required—namely, the administrative faculty to make the most of scanty materials. To have to fill a tall vase with a corresponding bouquet; to be short of flowers; to have to make up the deficiency with grass, corn, branches of shrubs, berries, mossy sticks, or whatever else can be grouped into a pleasing whole, and to produce a triumphant result, is no mean achievement of art and good management. There must not be too much of one colour, nor too much repetition of one form; and yet the bouquet must have graceful proportions combined with a meaning and character of its own. The proper sphere for such colossal groups is public buildings and palatial residences.

For smaller dwellings, on the other hand, a decoration of exquisite simplicity consists of bouquets entirely composed of one single species of flower, and even of one single variety of that species, when gardening resources admit of it—which is not always the case. For instance, a single, well-shaped, liberal-sized bunch of *mignonette*, or forget-me-not, or lilies of the valley, or double yellow *wellflower*, unpretending as they are, has its effect. It indicates singleness

of mind on the part of the person who adopts it. Other flowers which may be so employed, are *jonquils*, *anemones* (either all single or all double), and the *Persian lilac*, forced in the dark to whiten it. Try, again, a bouquet of tea roses only, of various sorts; or all moss roses; or of one sort of white rose only; or, as a delicacy of the highest order, of one sort of rosebuds only (of some salmon-coloured, light yellow, or pale-blush tint), rejecting the full-blown blooms, or rather reserving them for other purposes. Note that all the bouquets hitherto mentioned are intended to be kept in water, and that they reckon upon an existence of some little duration—three or four days, perhaps five or six.

For we now approach more ephemeral subjects—the ball bouquet, the bouquet to be tossed to an actress or sent to match a lady's evening dress. Such brilliant, gawgaw, toy-like bouquets are made, not for, but by the million. They are floral bubbles which rise in shoals to the surface of society, and then burst and disappear. Did you ever dissect a dead bouquet? Better than dissecting, is to fabricate one.

I am a gardener, a town gardener, and a flower gardener, with a large extent of high-vented ground under flowers only. Bouquets afford me considerable aid in paying my rent and my workmen's wages. While we are discussing the merits of rose novelties—[By the way, can you give me buds or cuttings of perpetual white roses which open well? We want such heaps of white roses for bouquets]—enters a middle-aged female, who is either a letter of furnished apartments, or Horace Walpole's *Mysterious Mother*.

“Your pleasure, ma'am?”

“A handsome bouquet, if you please, sir, to suit dark hair and brune complexion. I was ordered to pay for it.”

“We have none made up at present; but you shall have it in half an hour, if you will tell me where to send it.”

“I don't know exactly, sir, whether—whether I may tell you where—where it is—it is to be sent. The gentleman—”

“Very well, ma'am. Have the goodness, then, to wait while we are preparing it. Take a seat; or, if you prefer it, a walk round the garden.”

To execute the lady's confidential command, I snatch my flat open basket, and rush to the fuchsia-bed, where I gather simply a dozen different blossoms. Next, a good handful of dark inky *heliotrope*; then, a still larger handful of scarlet *geranium*; next, a good lot of fancy *pelargoniums* of various hues; next, a handsome bunch of *gypsophila*—little white starlike flowers, quivering at the tip of an elastic hairlike stem; and plenty of bright yellow *calceolarias*. The rose-ground gives me one very beautiful half opened *Gloire de Dijon*, and half a score or so of pure white *Aimée Viberts*. You observe that I take no flower-stems which carry buds. If we had to sacrifice flower-bearing stems and buds, bouquet-making would soon be at an end.

"But how will you make a bouquet with such bits of things as those?"

You shall see in half a minute. I pluck, finally, a good handful of box, such as is used for edging, and proceed to the factory shed. Did you ever examine what is called a composite flower? Take a daisy, and look at it with a strong magnifying-glass. You will see that it is made up, both border and middle, both rays and disk, of a number of little florets clustered together. Our ball bouquets are made after the same model. I have now to make one large circular flower with the separate florets in my basket.

"Good. Show me how you do it."

I first tie my bunch of box with string, and clip its top with shears, so that it resembles a circular pincushion or an artichoke bottom. It is the foundation of the structure; botanists would call it the receptacle of my composite flower. Here, I have bits of common rush, about ten or eleven inches long; there, I have bits of non-elastic iron wire, about as thick as a horse-hair, some three inches long. With a twist of wire I attach each flower to the end of a rush, giving it thus an artificial stem. You see how quickly it is done, especially when one has three or four helping hands. We will now stick the rush pins into the box pincushion—the flowers on their common receptacle. In the centre, I put my Gloire de Dijon rose, surrounding it with a circle of heliotrope; next comes a circle of *Aimée Vibert*; next of scarlet geranium; next of yellow calceolaria, and next of fancy pelargoniums. The whole is surrounded with a loose and hazy framework of glistening and trembling gypsophilas. The floral surface is even and convex. The shears shorten the rushes to a convenient length, and the bouquet is slipped into a funnel-shaped holder or case of card fringed with paper stamped into lace. All the scaffolding is hidden; the blossoms only meet the eye. As a finishing touch, the fuchsias are inserted round the edge, so as to droop like pendants over the lace.

"But a bouquet so built cannot last long."

Of course not. Putting it into water to preserve it would be as efficacious as putting your wooden leg into a foot-bath to cure a cold. A vapour-bath and a slight sprinkling, through the instrumentality of a tin box, or a cool wet towel, might refresh it a little. But, *que voulez-vous?* 'Tis their destiny. To-night's bouquet graces the day after to-morrow's dust-heap.

A bouquet may be something more than a nosegay; it may become an emblem, an allegory, a declaration, a message, a confession, a letter, a poem even. And permit me here to utter a word in excuse of, or apology for, emblems. Emblems are really a natural phase of thought, a favourite mode of conveying an idea. The language of flowers is a native product of the East. For instance, from time immemorial it has been acknowledged that the rose is the emblem of modest beauty, the viper of calumny, the mistletoe of parasitism, the dog of friendship. The horse is the impetuous warrior, while the frugal ass represents the laborious,

hardy, and obstinate peasant. But the whole system of nature is an unity which contains no contradictions. If we accept these striking analogies, we cannot refuse to admit others; we cannot deny that other plants and animals also offer emblematic allusions. They may thus be looked upon, in all their details, as so many mirrors of human passion. They constitute an immense museum of allegorical pictures, in which are painted the faults, the failings, or the virtues of humanity.

Floral language, to a certain extent, must depend on the significance given to colours. Unluckily, men are far from being agreed as to the latter point. The phalansterian school, Fourier's disciples, are the most precise and positive in their opinions. They hold that violet is analogous to friendship, blue to love, as suggested by blue eyes and the azure sky. A bunch of violets would, therefore, tell a lady's suitor that friendship is all he has a right to expect. Yellow is paternity or maternity; it is the yellow ray of the spectrum which causes the germ to shoot. Red figures ambition (*vide the planet Mars*); indigo, the spirit of rivalry; green, the love of change, fickleness, but also work; orange, enthusiasm; white, unity, universality; black, favouritism, the influence exerted by an individual. Certain persons have the gift of fascinating all who approach them; and black, which absorbs all the rays of the spectrum, is the reverse of white, which combines them in one.

Besides the seven primitive colours, grey, indicates poverty; brown, prudery; pink, modesty; silver-grey (semi-white), feeble love; lilac (semi-violet), feeble friendship; pale-pink, false shame, &c. But the analogical indications afforded by perfumes and colours are only superficial. As we may be deceived by a man's outside appearance, so may we be by that of a plant. To know it thoroughly, we must study it as a whole, from the leaf to the blossom, from the root to the seed. Thus, the root is the emblem of character and principle; the stem, of conduct; the leaf, of action, labour, energetic effort; the calyx, of the individual's mode of action; the petals, of the kind of pleasures enjoyed; the seed, of the wealth amassed or realised; the perfume, of the attractive influence exerted on others.

On the other hand, it may be objected that rose-colour is popularly held to be the colour of love:

O, my love is like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June:

while, if blue be the colour of love, there is no such thing as a Blue-rose: which is a contradiction. Milton also makes Adam say:

To love, thou blem'st me not; for Love, thou say'st,
Leads up to Heaven, is both the way and guide;
Fear with me then, if lawful what I ask:
Love not the heavenly Spirits, and how their love
Express they? By looks only?

To whom the Angel, with a smile that glowed
Celestial rosy red, Love's proper hue,
Answered.

Yellow is variously interpreted. Some hold it the type of jealousy, although Shakespeare makes that painful passion a *green-eyed monster*. Yellow is the hue of jaundice, and in Europe is the mark of pestilence and crime, of plague-smitten ships, and galley-slaves. In China (besides tinging the native complexion), it is proudly worn by Brothers of the Sun, and Cousins of the Moon. The marigold represents care and sorrow, in accordance with its French name, *souci*. For some, the yellow rose is a faithless and departing lover, while the Fourierists more consistently hold it to be a new-married lady. Sea-green may not inaptly call to mind the ever-fickle and capricious waves, the mariner's toils and wanderings; but green, the colour of the Mussulman prophet, represents one of the most obstinate, impassive, and unchanging families of the human race. The green rose is a sterile monstrosity, representing nothing but abortive efforts and mistaken intentions, which come to nothing.

Every flower has a double import. First, every flower not only means, but actually *is*, love. Bouquets, therefore, universally, are tokens of love, affection, and attachment. The perfume of the flower, like the song of birds, is a hymn of love, an incense of gratitude offered to the Creator. Linnæus called the corolla the nuptial couch of flowers. Flowers without corolla have nevertheless sweet perfumes to shed—witness the vine and the mignonette. Offensive flowers, like the stapelia and the dragon arum, have their analogies in brutal and repulsive passions. Every flower whatsoever is love, coarse or refined, honourable or base, pure or ignoble.

Besides this, all plants symbolise certain notes in the gamut of human passions. The brilliant tints of the carnation and its penetrating odour represent adult love, while the paler and fainter lilac is merely cousinage and childish attachment. The vine, the emblem of friendship, is content to embalm the air without dazzling the eye; because the affection which it figures has its source in intellectual affinity, quite independent of personal charms. On the other hand, certain autumnal flowers are speaking symbols of money-getting tradesmen who make no display till they are advanced in life. They then try to outdo their rivals by the showiness, amplitude, and number of their petals. Their dress is rich and gaudy, but its bad taste betrays the upstart. The hollyhock, in spite of its brilliancy, is stiff, cold, and pharmaceutical. The balsam, for want of a stalk, will not let you take it by the hand. The dahlia, with its big gouty feet and its formal plaited and ironed frill, is the very image of a priggish, antiquated beau. These flowers, like their representatives, being destitute of natural perfume or charm, are thereby excluded from bouquets. The mute language of the box-shrub, which represents straitened neediness, is far more eloquent. Its slight odour is coarse and homely, its corolla absent, and its fruit an ironical representation of a porridge-pot turned

upside down. It figures the indigent households in which both bed and board are scanty.

Of tokens not floral, our readers will be astonished to learn (from Madame Charlotte de la Tour's *Langage des Fleurs*) that, by a sort of tacit convention, the following signals have been adopted in several English towns:

If a gentleman wish to get married, he wears a ring on his left forefinger; if he is engaged, on the second finger; if married, on the third; and if he has no mind to marry, on the little finger. When a lady is open to an offer, she wears a ring on her forefinger; when engaged, on the second finger; when married, on the third; and when she eschews matrimony, on the fourth. If a gentleman, with his left hand, offer to a lady a flower, a fan, or any other pretty trifle, it is on his part a declaration of esteem. If she take it with the left hand, it is an acceptance of his homage; but if with the right hand, a refusal.

In France, such a code of signals might seriously affect the interests of matrimonial agents. It is possible, however, that sundry young gentlemen here, who innocently sport little-finger rings, are far from having taken vows of celibacy; while the less numerous damsels who adopt the same ornament, may only require a little soft persuasion to make it move upwards on the hand, with a skip, like the knight in chess.

THE ISLAND OF ALSEN AND THE AMIABLE PRUSSIANS.

THE contrast between the peaceful hills and valleys of North Devon—which have never been trodden by an invader since Hubba was overthrown on Northam Hill—and the unfortunate little island of the Sleswig Duchy, is all the more striking, when a yacht voyage and the sight of the ocean have alone intervened between them. More striking still to an Englishman, because Alsen might be a slice from an English county, so close in all respects is the resemblance. Sailing over Appledore Bar in the schooner yacht *Zoe*, on the 20th of April, 1864, the present eye-witnesses looked forward with warm interest to a visit to the gallant Danes; who, during two long months, had steadfastly held in check those great scourges of modern times, the armies of Austria and Prussia. For, like all the rest of the world, we had heard how these northern freemen fought against enormous odds, and faced disadvantages which might have made the boldest lose heart. How their goodness and high sense of chivalry had shone forth in treatment to the wounded and dead of their enemy. How they had been deserted by allies who were bound by honour, by treaty, and by interest, to step in between them and their despoilers. How, in spite of all, they were still resolved to show that a free race could stand its ground, even when twenty times their number of stick-driven conscripts were hurled against them, supported by a vast superiority in artillery.

The sandy Skaw, bristling with wrecks, grand

old Kronborg frowning over the Sound, and charming Copenhagen, were passed; and, on the day when the armistice was proclaimed, the yacht ran swiftly along the coasts of the pleasant Danish islands of Falster, Lolland, and Langeland, and approached the harbour of Harup Hav, on the southern shore of Alsen. A beautiful sight is such a yacht, with fore and main sails, gaff topsails, and the great square forcsail all pressing her onwards, and throwing off the milky foam from her bows, the blue ensign floating from her peak, and the Danebrog from her fore-topmast head. A Danish line-of-battle ship and a frigate kept guard off Harup Hav, and their crews must have seen in the approach of that little yacht, with their own proud ensign at her fore, not a token of that help which was due from the English government, at least a sign of the indignant sympathy of the English people. A salute of twenty-one guns, from the yacht's noisy little six-pounders, was cheerily answered by the line-of-battle ship, the Frederick the Sixth, as, with a fresh breeze, we ran under her stern, and bore up for the anchorage.

The spacious harbour of Harup Hav presented a busy scene on that first day of the suspension of hostilities. It is formed by a long neck of land, which is connected with the island of Alsen by a narrow sandy isthmus. In ordinary times we were told that it was rarely visited by even the smallest craft, and the pretty little village of thatched houses, surrounded by stately beech woods, is one of the most secluded places in Europe. War has changed all this. The harbour is crowded with steamers and transports. The pleasant meadows sloping down from the beech woods to the sea are trodden down, and occupied by cavalry and artillery waggons. Crowds of soldiers are to be seen everywhere; long new jetties run out into the harbour, with small craft laden with beer, cheese, and fish, ranged along them in tiers. Among the vessels of all shapes and sizes in the harbour, it was interesting to see the old-fashioned row gunboats, similar in all respects to those which made a gallant stand against Nelson, in the attack on Copenhagen. These gunboats, of which there are about sixty in the Danish navy, are of two sizes. The largest have thirty oars, two men to each, and a crew, therefore, of sixty men. They are armed with two heavy guns, a sixty-pounder forward, and a twenty-four-pounder aft. The others are much smaller, with one heavy gun aft. They seem well adapted for work in the Baltic, and have been employed, during the war, in rowing guard on the Sleswig coast.

The four miles of country intervening between Harup Hav and Sonderborg is in all respects like any part of England. There are fields divided by hedge-rows full of hawthorn, banks covered with primroses, extensive woods, comfortable-looking cottages by the roadside, and substantial farm buildings. The houses are generally of white brick, with thatched roofs, usually with a single story, having a long row

of windows, with pots of flowers in them. Between the road and the door a little gravel walk is lined with double daisies; and occasionally a stork may be seen in its great nest of sticks on a lee gable. Several windmills crown the hill above Sonderborg, whence the main street descends by a gentle slope to the shores of the narrow sound separating Alsen from the mainland of Sleswig.

Sonderborg is pleasantly situated. The lower part of the town is built along the shore of Alsen Sound, and flanked on the north side by a church on a steep hill, and on the south by the old slot or castle, a massive brick building close to the water. In the upper part of the town many of the houses are battered with shot and shell, and the town-hall in the centre of the main street is a picture of ruin. The gable stands out naked against the sky, and the walls are shattered and crumbling. But as we approached the water, we entered upon a scene of appalling desolation in the lower town. Not a house had escaped destruction. Shot and shell had smashed in the roofs, burst in the rooms and through the ceilings, demolished the furniture, and broken gaping holes in the outer walls. All was silence and utter ruin—such a scene as one would not wish often to see. The doomed town was abandoned, no one was in the houses. Except a soldier here and there, not a soul was to be seen. In one house there had been deers' heads and antlers ornamenting the hall, and some china vases, a pretty fire-screen, and an old carved oak table; a shell had burst in the midst, shattered this poor family's little household gods, and buried them in a cloud of plaster from the ceiling. Still worse was it to see the source of some poor man's livelihood, the carpenter's lathe and workshop, and the little stock-in-trade of draper or grocer, destroyed and desolated by the bursting of a shell. We afterwards saw a few families returning in carts to gaze once more upon their ruined homes. Old men driving, and women and children crowded behind them. In one cart there was an aged woman, quite bedridden, coming to have a last look at the house she had probably lived in from childhood, or to which she had been brought, some half century before, a happy bride, now a shapeless heap of desolation. Such sights as these filled us with indignation at the wanton cruelty of the Prussians. Here, indeed, was devil's work, instigated by rapacity, carried into execution with that extreme caution which deprives war of all its romance, and perpetrated without a single excuse which could palliate its atrocity.

To the north of Sonderborg a gentle ascent leads to the church overlooking Alsen Sound, and here the Danes have constructed a battery commanding the bridge, which is now destroyed. The sound is not three hundred yards across at this point. On the opposite shore of Sleswig, to the extreme left, are the heights of Broager, whence Sonderborg was bombarded. Opposite the town there are a few houses, and a road leads straight up from the head of the bridge to the Dybbol windmill, now in ruins. A few

fragments of the bridge are still floating in mid-channel. Here was the tête-du-pont, a simple breastwork with a few field-pieces, which, however, effectually checked the Prussians after they had stormed the Dybbol works, until the gallant little Danish remnant had retreated across the bridge. We could see the heights which were crowned by the slight Danish defences, and we saw also hundreds of Prussians at work on them with pick and shovel, in contempt of the armistice and of their own plighted word.

The "church battery" is formed along the ridge on the north side of Sonderborg, which is crowned by a church. It commands the strait, but is itself on lower ground than, and completely at the mercy of, any guns which the Prussians may plant on Dybbol heights. In each bastion, formed of earth and fascines, there are two embrasures, occupied by an eighty-pounder smooth bore about twenty years old (Christian the Eighth marked on the trunnion), and a twelve-pounder rifled field-gun. We asked an artillery officer how long he thought they would be able to hold the battery after the Prussians opened fire upon them, and he replied, "About eight hours." Like true patriots, these gallant Danes are resolved to fight to the last in defence of their country, though they know well how overpowering are the odds that are pitted against them.

Although the Prussian war at Sonderborg is bad enough, yet the same signs of their shameful cruelty are to be seen all along the shores of Alsen Sound for a distance of six miles, from Sonderborg to Ronnehaven. A drive to the latter place is really like a drive in one of the richest English counties in lovely spring weather. There are hedges full of May, with tall trees rising out of them, the same flowers by the roadside, corn-fields, and bright green beech woods. As we drove along, there were occasional pretty glimpses of the narrow sound, and the land of Sleswig beyond. Then a gable would come in sight, and just as we expected to see a prosperous looking farm-house, with its haystacks and outbuildings, a scene of horrible desolation would burst upon us. The house gutted, the walls smashed, outbuildings burnt, and naked gables standing out against the sky. Most of the farms we passed in the neighbourhood of Kjar were in this state; but destruction on the largest scale had fallen on the once rich and prosperous farm of Mr. Rosen, at Ronnehaven. It stands on a hill overlooking Alsen Sound, and consists of a large house of white bricks on granite foundations, with very extensive farm buildings round two court-yards in the rear. The machinery and all the arrangements had been in the most improved modern style of high farming. Behind the farm buildings a kitchen garden stretches away to the skirts of a wood of beech and alder trees, and in front of the house a large pond was once full of ducks and geese. The surrounding corn-fields and pastures completed the picture—a scene of prosperous intelligent wealth in the midst of a lovely rural landscape. Such was

Rosen's farm in 1863. Now it is a mass of crumbling ruins: no sound is heard, no living thing is seen. The Prussians poured in a storm of shell with wanton barbarity, day after day, until the whole place was reduced to ashes. Not a shed, not even a dunghill had escaped. A dead lamb was lying amidst a heap of burnt straw, with a fragment of shell in its side. Pieces of the death-dealing iron were lying about in all directions, both in the buildings and in the surrounding fields. We examined many of these fragments, and also a whole shell which had failed to burst, and we were surprised to find that, in spite of all the talk about their artillery, these Prussians are clumsy and inefficient, even in their own devil's work. The shells are conical, and bound round with hoops of iron, apparently intended to keep the outer coating of lead in its place, for they do not even know how to attach lead to the iron chemically; and of course it peels off after leaving the gun and before the shell bursts, necessarily causing considerable deflection. We saw this in the case of the shell which had not burst. The lead was stripped off in long strips half way down the side, and projected from the surface of the shell. Thus they do not effect their ravaging work by the precision with which a few shells are thrown, but by pouring great numbers in one direction during several days, until at last the defenceless homestead is burnt, or the desired number of women and little children are torn to pieces. It is a slight consolation to reflect that their ghastly and clumsy work costs them about thirty shillings for each shell that is fired.

A couple of fields below Rosen's farm the Danes threw up a battery to command the passage of the sound, at a point where the Prussians collected several hundred boats in which to effect a crossing. The Prussians have batteries all along the sound, and a large one at Schnabek, on the extreme northern end. The coast of Sleswig is here well wooded and very pretty. Immediately opposite the Danish battery there is a handsome country-house, with grassy lawn and gravel walks, belonging to Count Raventlow, a traitor. The place is called Sandberg, and here the Prussian flotilla has been collected, the boats having been brought by rail from all parts of Holstein and Southern Sleswig.

In the rear of Ronnehaven, and close to the shores of Augustenborg-fjord, is the palace of the banished duke, now converted into a hospital for the wounded. The Prussians opened fire upon it on two occasions during the siege of Dybbol, but it was fortunately out of range. The palace itself is a huge barrack-like pile, but behind it most beautiful beech woods slope down to the shores of the fjord. These woods were in the brightest spring verdure, the young leaves in their richest green, and the rays of the sun struck through them here and there in the long vistas. The ground was carpeted with violets and primroses, and in places there were small thickets of alder. The Augustenburg family forfeited this charming place—for which,

however, they received three hundred thousand pounds in compensation—by their selfish treason in 1848. Had the duke then remained true to his country, he would now have been King of Denmark, and undisputed heir to the duchies.

The Danish force in the island of Alsens, at the time of our visit, numbered about nine thousand men, under the command of that General Steinmann who behaved so nobly in the battle of Oversee, where he was wounded.

Never did troops behave better than the defenders of Dybbol. True patriots and gallant soldiers, they cheerfully marched into that deadly fire without flinching, day after day; a position where they could make no return to the enemy's storm of shells, but merely stand up to die for their country. It is impossible to conceive a more trying service, and their glorious defence of Dybbol entitles them to take rank among the first soldiers in the world. Nor are their other qualities, which complete the character of a patriot soldier, less admirable than their gallantry in the field. The Prussian prisoners and wounded have been treated with extreme kindness and courtesy, while each dead enemy has received a separate wooden coffin, and not an article has ever been taken from them. This exceptional conduct on the part of the Danes, which could hardly be expected from English, and certainly not from French soldiers, makes the brutality and wanton cruelty of the Prussians—officers being even worse than privates—all the more revolting. During the whole time that the Danish forces have been in Alsens, not a single case of theft: not an excess of any kind, has occurred. Always on the best and kindest terms with the country people upon whom they are billeted, they present a contrast to almost any other troops in the world. With them cheerfulness and generous feeling towards the enemy is combined with indomitable courage and unequalled fortitude. Unsupplied with bands, the regiments sing national songs as they march, and no village on the road has any other feeling for the brave fellows but sympathy and kindness.

The achievements of the iron-clad Rolf Krake, which has three times been engaged against land forts, are interesting as the first example of a turret ship (constructed on the principle invented by Captain Cowper Coles, R.N.) having been in action. We passed her at sea on her way from Alsens to refit, and afterwards visited her in dry dock at Copenhagen, when her decks were crowded with admiring visitors. The Rolf Krake has two revolving turrets containing her guns, iron-plated on the sides, but with open iron gratings on the top, so as to admit of ample ventilation. The deck consists of three-quarters of an inch iron, with wood overall. The bulwarks were shot to pieces, the deck torn up in several places, the mizen topmast and bowsprit shot away, and the funnel riddled through and through. One shell had gone right through the deck, close to the gun-room door, and it was this shell, from one of the forts on the Broomer heights, which killed

the first lieutenant and wounded several men. But the turrets had stood well; they had been struck three or four times, and the missiles had only made very slight indentations in the iron; the men, however, were exposed to a galling fire of rifles down the open gratings on their tops. We understood that this evident defect was to be remedied, and that during the refit the turrets were to receive a covering similar to those on the turrets of the Royal Sovereign. The gallant crew of the Rolf Krake had done their work right well, and the worthy people of Copenhagen have good reason to be proud of them. The ships which had just gained a victory over the Austrians, the Neils Juel, Jylland, and Heindal, were also lying off Copenhagen at the time of our second visit, together with the rest of the Danish fleet. On the sea, at least, this little kingdom is still a match for the overgrown despotisms that would crush her. The blood of the Vikings still stirs in the veins of her sons, and enables them to retain a superiority on an element where their blundering enemies never feel at home.

We left Denmark more strongly impressed than ever with admiration for that brave little nation. The qualities of the Danes, we firmly believe, bring them as near perfection as any community has yet attained to in this world. Speaking of them collectively, they are truthful, honest, and kind-hearted. The latter quality is more particularly observable in their invariable tenderness to animals: birds are tamer in Denmark than in any other part of the world. Of their bravery, let Dybbol speak; while intellectually, whether in arts, in scholarship, or in science, few people with so small a population have been more distinguished. Tycho Brahe, Oehlenschläger, Erasmus Rask, Thorwaldsen, Westergaard, Worsaae, Thomsen, Andersen, are names which crowd to the memory as those of Danish worthies who have given their country a proud name in the annals of civilisation. And, besides and above this excellence in literature and art, it should never be forgotten that the Danes are a free people politically, as free as the English, and that it is on this account that they have excited the hostility of the stupid tyrants of Germany.

ELEVEN HUNDRED POUNDS.

"My dears," I said to the three children I had nursed and reared for upwards of fifteen years, till the eldest was a grown-up young lady of eighteen—"my dears, mother is getting a poor weakly old body, and there's no one to mind her and the shop at home, and I am afraid I shall have to leave you. It would break my heart to go, if our house wasn't in the same street, and I can see you every day. But I can never say good-by to you and the master, so I'll run away early some morning."

Of course I waited till they could hire a new servant, a long lanky girl that moved slowly about the house, and took no interest in any-

thing; and even then, though I was badly wanted at home, I could hardly find it in my heart to tear myself away from the children and the old master, who was getting infirm and weakly, like mother; for he was in years when he married, being a minister on a middling sort of a salary, and he had made up his mind not to venture upon the expenses of a family till he had saved one thousand pounds clear, so that he was upwards of forty before he had gathered all that sum together, and invested it somewhere in a way that brought him in nearly fifty pounds a year. Mrs. Ambery, poor dear, had been waiting for him ever since she was a girl of twenty, and he only five years older; waiting all that weary time, with an ache and pain at her heart, as her girlhood passed by and the prime of her years faded, till her hair began to grow grey, and all across her forehead were fine little wrinkles that could be seen plainly enough by daylight. On her wedding-day, when the sun shone as brightly as if she was only twenty again, you could have counted the lines one by one as soon as she lifted up her white veil to sign her name in the register. She used to tell me often how different her wedding-day was to what she had fancied it would be when she was a girl, and all her married life as well, she would say sometimes, with a sigh. Not that they were not happy, the minister and his wife, but they had waited so long that they had grown into grave, elderly, sobered people; and when the children came, though they were only three little girls, it made a terrible upset in their quiet lives. They were as fond of them as could be; but Mr. Ambery had his own old bachelor ways, and the poor dear mistress liked to have her regular hours for reading and meditation, and minding all sorts of good things, which the young creatures could not be expected to understand, though Rebecca, the eldest, was the gravest child I ever saw at three years old, when I went to be nurse to her and Katie. That child danced once for a few seconds when I was trimming her Sunday bonnet with some sky-blue ribbon that a lady of the congregation gave me for the purpose; but I never saw her so light again, though I'm sure nobody blamed the little thing for it: only she had the tenderest conscience for a child I ever knew, and Mrs. Ambery taught her all Watts's Divine Songs for children. At times I thought to myself that the thousand pounds, though it was a large sum of money, had cost the minister and his wife a good deal more than it was worth, and I fancy Mrs. Ambery thought so likewise; for one day when she came into the nursery whilst the two youngest children were having a fine game of romp with me, she passed her thin hand across her wrinkled forehead, and over her dim eyes, and she said, "Mary, I'd give a thousand pounds to have a game like that, but I've no spirits left. I should have made a better mother if I had been married years ago. Don't you put it off too long."

Well, poor dear Mrs. Ambery was taken away from her husband and children when Rebecca

was just eight years old. The little children sat in the pew with their father on the Sunday night when the pastor from another church preached Mrs. Ambery's funeral sermon, and everybody wept, and said it was a very affecting occasion. There was the grave child Rebecca, and pretty Katie, just turned six, and little delicate Nellie, not quite four; while Mr. Ambery, who had never looked a young man, seemed stricken fully ten years older by the death of his Catherine, who had waited for him to save up his one thousand pounds, until her strength and spirits were quite worn out.

If the children had been old enough to be company for him, the master might have borne up better; but as it was, he began to mope in an absent kind of way, as if he had lost something, and could not recollect what it was. The congregation said his sermons were not as good as they used to be; and, after they had given him six months to recover himself in, they sent a deputation to reason with him about resignation and Providence. The servant of one of the deputation told me that my master answered nothing, but bowed his face down upon his hands, and wept speechlessly, till no one of them had dry eyes himself. After that, they called a meeting, and collected fifty pounds to send him a tour on the Continent, which he went, sadly and alone, writing home to the children letters full of their poor dead mother, till I could not read them to the little creatures for my own crying.

Over two years after the master had been wandering all by himself about the Continent which did him very little good, he called me into his study one night after the children were gone to bed. I was in a tremble, for I always had that opinion of men, that if any one of them could have an angel to be his wife, and she died, he would be drawn in to marry any designing woman who set her mind upon it, and I had reason to know that there were three or four persons in the congregation, widows or old maids, who were ready enough to take Mrs. Ambery's place, and become step-mother to my darlings. I was prepared to speak up against it with all my might; but I went into my master's study meekly, and stood quiet, not showing how I trembled, just inside the door.

"Mary," said Mr. Ambery, who was sitting by the fire, stooping badly, as he had done ever since she died, and shaking his poor white head every now and then, as if everything in this world was good for nothing—"Mary, come forward and sit down by the fire. I want to speak with you."

The tremble was worse then; but I made shift to cross the room and sit down as he bade me, and as I looked into his face, which was greatly troubled, I saw the tears standing in his eyes. He seemed like a man in that weakly, undecided frame of mind, that wanted somebody to settle it up for him, and I was quite ready to do it if the burden upon it had anything to do with marrying again.

"Máry," he said, wiping his eyes, "I've been pastor of this church ever since I was eight-and-twenty years of age, and from time to time my income has been raised from one to two hundred pounds a year. It has been a little hard upon the members, perhaps, to raise the latter sum, for they are not rich people, and our dependence has been upon the pew-rents. But for the last two years—since *that* time, Máry—the congregation has been dwindling away before my eyes. God knows I have done my best, though His hand is heavy upon me. But it is hinted to me quietly, not officially, that my people wish me to give place to a younger and more energetic man. They would give me a pension of forty pounds a year, and obtain for me the further sum of thirty pounds from a fund for aged and disabled ministers, upon which income they want me to retire."

"I wouldn't do it, sir," I answered, warmly; "they cannot turn you out, and seventy pounds a year would never keep you and the three children respectably."

"Nay," said the minister, his pale face flushing red, as if the fire scorched it, though there was nothing but embers in the grate, "it has been known for a Christian congregation to starve out their pastor by cutting off his supplies. I dare not refuse; my spirit is broken, and shrinks from conflict. Moreover, Máry, I am not solely dependent upon my ministerial income. I have private property which brings me in nearly fifty pounds a year."

"Three and four," I said, counting upon my fingers, "are seven, and five makes twelve, and a nought after twelve comes to one hundred and twenty. We could manage with one hundred and twenty pounds a year, sir."

"We were right, then," he said, with a glow of pleasure; "Catherine and I did not deny ourselves in vain. Our little ones will be provided for."

I thought the little ones might have been big ones by this time, and able to provide for themselves; but I said nothing to damp his spirits. However, in the course of a few months we retired upon a pension, and as our income was a good deal lessened, I gave the other servant notice, and we settled down in a small but well-looking house, a little back from the street, in as respectable a part of the town as one could desire, with the little shop of confectionery, which my mother kept herself by, not more than a stone's throw off.

Rebecca was quite a pattern of a child, the very picture of her poor dead mother, with fine little lines upon her forehead before she was twelve years old, and a careful look in her face as if she was saving up the very fun and mirth a child ought to have. Never was any young creature so strait-handed and sparing; even while she was small enough to have a doll, she stinted and contrived for it, like a full-grown mother. But withal she was conscientious, and I used often to think, as we sat in one of the back pews of the chapel, and watched her all through the service as serious and attentive as a grown-up

woman, what a lucky thing it was for her that we were too poor and humble to be taken much notice of, or she would have been encouraged to be too pious for a child, and maybe grow up into a hypocrite. But there was no danger of all that with the other two, Katie and Nellie; they were merry little romps, like other children, and a very sore exercise of spirit were they often and often to Rebecca.

At last I was obliged to run away from them. I could not wait upon the customers all that day, because my face was red and swollen with crying. It was a long time before I could reconcile myself to living in another house; but after all, it was a good thing for the children. Miss Rebecca, as was quite natural at her age, took the management of the house, and beat me hollow in making things go a long way. It was a hard life for a young girl never to know the pleasure of wasting a shilling; for it is pleasant to have money to spend without counting the pence, but Rebecca reckoned up every farthing; and if Katie and Nellie had any pocket-money, it was only like some clergyman's daughters that Katie laughingly told me about, who had a sovereign apiece on condition that they neither changed it nor spent it.

It is not quite becoming in me to tell it; but though I am a single woman, forty years of age, I have had no less than ten offers of marriage: some before I left Mr. Ambery's family, but more since I have had a shop of my own. It always looks suspicious to me, now, when an elderly man begins to buy sugar-candy or gingerbread frequently; and so I am put upon my guard, and never taken by surprise, and hurried into saying yes, as many poor women are. The principal lawyer in the town was a bad, grasping man, that had been the ruin of scores upon scores of poor widows and orphans. To be his clerk was no recommendation, and Joshua Lamb, though he had a beautiful house, with a drawing-room ten times better furnished than Mr. Ambery's best parlour, and a carpet of fern-leaves and oak upon the floor fit for any lady in the town, was very attentive to me. It was the carpet, and two or three other little things about this house, that hindered me from giving Joshua a short answer, and sending him about his business; but though he had such a room of his own to sit down in like any gentleman, he seemed to like better my little quarried kitchen at the back of the shop; and many an evening he spent there, talking away glibly, but never throwing me off my guard, so as to get anything like a "yes" out of me, for the very thought that he was clerk to a bad lawyer made me keep my wits about me as much as if he had been a revolver, with a great number of barrels, ready to go off at any minute.

It was five years since I left my children. Katie was gone out as a governess; and Mr. Ambery had sunk further into an infirm old age, and left everything to Rebecca. She grew more saving than ever; and though she gave away a tenth of their income to charity and religion, because she believed it to be right to

that no losses through ill-health or misfortunes should come upon them. She would scarcely spend a farthing upon herself. She wore no flowers, or flounces, or ribbons, like other girls; yet with all that, and the fine faint lines upon her face—which nobody could see so well as I did, who knew her poor dear mother—she was by far the prettiest young lady that attended our chapel, when Katie was away.

The young minister—the second since Mr. Ambery resigned—took a fancy to Rebecca. It was edifying, even to me who knew her little faults, to see her at public worship, with her dark eyes downcast, and the beautiful long lashes lying over on her cheeks, as still and quiet as on a baby's sleeping face. The minister never caught her eye wandering, nor even lifted up to himself, until he read out his text, and then they fixed on him with a steady, serious gaze, as if he was some angel from heaven, who could have no earthly thoughts of love or anything of that sort.

Never had a young minister so much need of counsel from his elder pastor. I saw Mr. Craig rambling down our street most days, a studious-looking, thoughtful young man, the very man to win our Rebecca; and, as I watched him out of sight, I could often have cried with the earnest wish I had that all might go smoothly with them, and that they might get comfortably married before all the nature was worn out of them with the troubles of this weary world.

Early one morning, while I was mixing my dough for the breakfast-rolls, the shop-bell rang furiously, and who should rush through into my bakehouse but Rebecca, with nothing on her head save a shawl! We were used to run to and fro in that fashion after nightfall, but never in the daylight, with the eyes of the street upon us; and there she stood, gasping for breath, with her hand pressed against her bosom, and her large dark eyes looking larger and blacker from the ashy paleness of her face. My own heart beat at the sight of her till I could not speak, and we stood staring at one another in silence, as if the last day was come.

"Your father," I gasped out at last.

"He is asleep," she muttered with difficulty; "I haven't told him, nor Nellie."

"Katie!" I cried.

"No, no," she answered, "she is all right." And I leaned my head down upon my floury hands, and cried for very joy; for I had thought of nothing but that one of them was dead.

So I took Rebecca into my little kitchen, all trembling and shivering as she was, and set her down in my mother's arm-chair upon the hearth, keeping her hand pressed hard upon her heart to quiet its beating, till the colour began to come back into her face, and the sobs died away so that she could speak.

"Mary," she said, in a grand reasoning sort of way, as if she was setting me up for a judge, "you have known us all our lives. Have we ever been like other girls, flaunting, and idle, and extravagant? Have I not kept myself and my sisters aloof from all evil as carefully as my

of all our income to the poor."

"My dear," I interrupted, for though I was proud of her and the other two, I did not like to hear her talk in that manner, "there are no young ladies equal to you in all the town. But what ever is the matter?"

"Listen," she said, and she read to me a lawyer's letter, with a great many whereases and notwithstanding in it; but the pith of it, as I could make it out, was, that the old scoundrel, Mr. Corbett, Joshua's master, gave notice to Mr. Ambery that he had the sum of eleven hundred pounds to pay on that day six months. Red as my face was from the heat of the oven, I felt it going as pale as Rebecca's own.

"My dear," I whispered, for it seemed too dreadful to speak about aloud, "how is it? What is the meaning of it?"

"I hardly know," she said; "all I can understand is, that my father was made a trustee to a marriage settlement belonging to a cousin of Mr. Corbett's, more than thirty years ago; and this money was left in my father's hands, or Mr. Corbett is trying to make out that it was. Do you know, Mary, that the interest for five hundred pounds, at only four per cent, will come to six hundred. I have done that sum in my head already—oh! a hundred times. Eleven hundred pounds!"

We sat speechless some minutes after that, till Rebecca burst out again crying, and wringing her hands.

"Oh! I wish I was a man," she sobbed; "I wish I understood law and business! I know it is wrong! I know it is cheaterly! But what can we do against Mr. Corbett?"

"Why does he come upon us now, after all these years?" I asked.

"His cousin is just dead," she answered. "Mr. Corbett is executor of his will, and is winding up his affairs, I suppose. Eleven hundred pounds, Mary!"

There were no breakfast-rolls made that morning. I went down home with Rebecca; and she carried her father's breakfast up-stairs to bed as usual; and we waited as patiently as we could, till he was dressed, and had finished his own private prayers, which seemed longer than ever that day. But he came down stairs at length, looking so calm and tranquil, with his thin white hair brushed back from his kindly face, that the moment Rebecca saw him she ran and threw her arms round his neck, and leaning her head upon his breast, wept there as she had never done before.

We should have told Mr. Ambery at once, for Rebecca's strange conduct alarmed him, but his first thought, like mine, was that something had happened to Katie. There was a letter from the child to her eldest sister, left unopened on the table, for the lawyer's letter had caught Rebecca's eye first; but now she broke the seal, and read it out aloud in a dry hard voice—such a letter! for it had been written in a merry, yet timid, fluttering confidence, telling what the

young creature scarcely dared to confess to herself, that away from home and all of us, she had found some one whom she could love better than us all. And there stood Rebecca, reading it out before everybody, hardly knowing what the sense was; and just folding it up like a common letter when she had finished it.

"But listen to this, father," she said, tossing Katie's letter aside like a useless thing, and while the father was dwelling upon his child's words, Rebecca read the dreadful notice in a clear and distinct voice, as if it were a sermon. Mr. Ambery did not hearken at first; but, as she went on, he fixed his eyes upon her, and a look of vexation and anxiety settled on his face.

"My love," he said, almost peevishly, "I never touched that money in my life."

"Then what does all this mean?" asked Rebecca.

"I don't know what it means," he answered, in a helpless manner. "I do just remember Mary Corbett. Yes, she married Thompson, who went to college with me, but took to some business afterwards. I was trustee to her marriage-settlement, and John Ward was the other. If either of the trustees had the money in his hands, it was Ward, but he died years ago. They are all dead now."

"But, father," said Rebecca, who had a good head for business matters, "the money would be invested in some way, or paid into a bank, and you would get some receipt or acknowledgment for it. Just try to recollect."

"Ah!" he cried, after a few minutes' thought, "I remember Ward bringing me a document, which he said was a deed of release. But it is thirty years ago, and I must have put it into some place of safety. We must find it, and send it to Mr. Corbett."

The finding was easier to speak of than to do. Mr. Ambery had been writing sermons ever since he was twenty; and as if he had been one of those Turks I heard of at a missionary meeting who think it a sin to destroy a bit of paper, and I thought of the master the moment they were mentioned; he had kept every sermon and writing of his own, as though they were sacred, precious things. Also, he had kept every letter he had received. Ah! there were all the poor, dear, dead mistress's letters, for all the weary years they were waiting, tied up in packets for each twelve months; and Rebecca's white face, with the lines growing harder and plainer upon it, bent over them anxiously, as she unfolded one after another, to see if peradventure the costly document was among them. We were the more certain that the master had never made away with it, from the very numbers of the papers that were stored away in one place or another; even to a little closet under the eaves, so full that when the door was opened, the bundles of yellow sermons rolled out along the passage floor. But Rebecca sought perseveringly; and when she had searched in vain through every packet, she began again, though with a feeling of despair, and went through her wearisome task a second time, so sure were we

all that Mr. Ambery had put the deed in safety somewhere.

I did not tell Rebecca, but some ugly reports were being whispered about the town, and I wondered how the matter got abroad. Even the members of the church began to ask where the old minister's money came from, that thousand pounds lent out on two chapels, as many people knew. Had he inherited any property? Or had he had a legacy left him? Or had Mrs. Ambery brought him any fortune? Mr. Corbett came to service, morning and evening, with his smooth bland face, with its pleasant smile, like Satan turned into an angel of light; and his voice and manner overcame everybody, until even I shook hands with him in the chapel-yard, just because he held out his soft hand, with a pleasant look that robbed me of my senses, and he nodded to Joshua Lamb as if he had been his familiar friend. Just when the reports were at the worst, he threw himself into old Mr. Ambery's way as he came out of the porch, and taking off his hat with a look of the deepest reverence and affection, he grasped the hand of the poor, innocent victim, till all the congregation were greatly affected, and felt inclined to suspect their old pastor tenfold.

These rumours and scandals could not go on without it being necessary to bring them before the church. Mr. Craig warded off the blow for a long time; but the cry, which had not reached Rebecca and her father, was growing louder and louder, and it must be silenced or answered. I know that Mr. Craig held several private and irregular conferences with the leading members before he would call a church meeting to investigate the scandal about their aged pastor; but it had to come to that at last. He was closeted up with Mr. Ambery all one long morning, while Rebecca was finishing her second unsuccessful search; and when he came out of the study, he rushed through the lobby without heeding her as she stood within the sitting-room, and pulling the house-door after him with a great bang, he strode up the street, and passed my shop window, with a face ghastly pale.

We were sitting all together that night after evening prayer, and Mr. Ambery was smoking his pipe as peacefully as if there was neither sorrow nor care in the world, when Rebecca laid aside her mending—she always seemed to be mending rather than making—and she spoke in a hard, decisive manner, as though she had quite made up her mind how the present misfortune should be managed.

"Father," she said, "the deed of release is nowhere in the house. The claim is unjust and wicked, but Mr. Corbett has too much sense to make it if it is illegal, and it will swallow up the thousand pounds, which are the savings of your lifetime. I see only one way to escape out of our difficulty."

"My love," said her father, laying down his pipe, and folding his hands one over the other, as he looked into her anxious face, so like Mrs. Ambery's, "your poor mother and I denied ourselves all the joys and pleasures of youth to

gather this money together for you children. It was a great sacrifice, and I would not lose the fruit of it willingly. What am I to do?"

"The money is your own, father," she answered, "but you cannot keep it as yours. Give it to us children at once. Withdraw it from your investment, and make a gift of it in equal shares to us three. They could take it away from you, but not from us."

"And what will they do to me?" asked the old man.

"They may make you a bankrupt," she cried, rising and flinging her arms round his neck, "but we shall love you more, and all good people will not honour you less."

Mr. Ambery sat gazing thoughtfully into the fire, shaking his white head from time to time during his reflections. But I could not bear the idea of my master being made a bankrupt.

"Rebecca," said Mr. Ambery, "this morning Mr. Craig came hither to tell me that evil reports have arisen. They say that I have possessed myself of this money fraudulently, and already a church meeting is decided upon to investigate my conduct. My good name is more precious to me than gold or silver. What think you, my daughter? If I consent to do this thing which you propose, could I lift up my face before the congregation, or raise my voice in the church to deny this charge? Shall I say, 'My money is justly my own, but I cannot prove it so, and to save it from being wrested from me, whether I came by it honestly or dishonestly, I have given it over unto my children; let the accuser take what he can'? Rebecca, you shall decide this thing."

Not a word had Rebecca heard before either of the scandal or the church meeting, and as her father spoke of them, she stood before him as if turned into stone, with clenched hands, and lips half open, and forehead furrowed with deep, dreadful thoughts. It was terrible to her pride to think of her father bearing the name of bankrupt, but the blot of dishonesty was a thousand times harder, and she had to weigh pride and dishonour against the long growing of a love and care for money. All of us looking upon her knew that she was wrestling with temptation, and we held our breath, and turned away our eyes, whispering low down in our inmost spirits a prayer for her. There was a long, long silence, while we neither moved nor sighed, and there was no sound but the crackling of the embers in the grate, as they wasted away in the consuming flame.

"Father," cried Rebecca, throwing herself on her knees beside him, "I've loved this money; oh! I've loved it more than I knew myself. Every one of those thousand pounds, every shilling that has come to us as interest, has been very dear to me; not altogether from covetousness, dear father—a little of that, perhaps—but it has all seemed to prove your care for us, yours and my mother's. You laid it up for us, saving it from your own youth to make ours easier, and must the thief break through and steal the treasure? Well, let it go. Anything

to keep your good name free. I will love no money again."

I never saw the young creature, who had grown old before her time, look so radiant and youthful as she knelt there, smiling bravely into her father's face. Mr. Craig would have given something for that vision, I guess. We drew a long breath of relief and gladness, and spoke no more of the trouble that night.

The very next day Joshua Lamb came in to buy a cheese-cake or two after his dinner, and as I had my own purpose to serve (no doubt he, being a lawyer's clerk, had his also), I invited him to step into my kitchen, and made myself agreeable to him. A man, even if he is a lawyer's clerk, is sometimes outwitted by a woman, and by-and-by my gentleman began talking in a very low and confidential tone, leaning over the small round table between us, till I almost drew back from him, only I was too wary for that.

The day the church meeting was to be held, Katie came home for the Michaelmas holidays. We had told her nothing, and I suppose little notice had been taken of her confidential letter to Rebecca, for when we were alone together (she and I), she pouted, and blushed up to the roots of her hair, and then hid her face upon my shoulder.

"You will care about it," she murmured, "though Rebecca doesn't, because she intends to be an old maid herself. Oh, he is such a darling! And you're not to suppose you are going to step over my head, if you do go and marry Joshua Lamb, and have that lovely carpet of fern-leaves. I'll be higher than you yet. If you marry the clerk, I'll marry the master!"

"My dear," I cried, thinking of that awful scoundrel, Mr. Corbett, "don't make a jest of such a dreadful thing."

"But I will make a jest of it," she said, "and it isn't dreadful to be married, you best of old maids. We'll work Joshua just as hard whether you marry him or not, and Harry shall have fine times with doing nothing but mind me. Why, Mary, aren't you glad for me to settle down at home amongst you all?"

"But who is Harry?" I asked.

"The nephew of Mr. Corbett, the great rich lawyer here," she answered. "He is to become his partner now he has finished his law studies, and we are to be quite grand, you know. Why, Harry's father died a little time ago, and left him I don't know how much money."

I felt sick at heart to hear Katie rattle on about Harry Thompson and his uncle; but I could not gather up strength to tell her about the trouble at home, just then in the first glee of coming back to us. So, in the evening, we only told her there was going to be a church meeting, and as I had been a member of the church for some years, to be an example to my children, I went down to walk with Mr. Ambery and Rebecca to the chapel.

Of course Mr. Corbett could not be present, but many a one was there who had been won

over to his side by his gloss and blandishments, and by the sly dark scandal against Mr. Ambery. Rebecca and I took our seats quite at the back of the chapel, and my poor child covered her face with a thick veil. But the master went and took his customary place among the deacons, with the young minister presiding over them, just underneath the pulpit, from which he had taught and comforted the church for upwards of thirty years. The very sight of his white head, tremulous and bowed down with age, and not with dishonour, ought to have stricken them into shame, and I did see several, who were getting on in life themselves, hide their faces for a minute or two in their hands, as if they were saying a second prayer on his behalf alone.

There was a long stifling hush after all the usual work was over, so dreadful that all our hearts throbbed and fluttered painfully, while we gazed with fixed eyes upon our young minister. You could see him shiver; you could catch the light falling upon big tears which forced their way through the fingers of his hand covering his eyes; you could almost hear the muttered words that rose to his lips, and were choked back again to his heart by his sobs. Every one of us, except Rebecca, gazed upon him awe-stricken, and a sigh, that sounded like a sorrowful wailing, rolled round the chapel, as he stretched out his trembling hand towards the old pastor.

"Brethren," he cried, "I cannot! I cannot! You ask me to sit in judgment upon a father. God knows I have looked upon Mr. Ambery as a most revered father. Choose one from among yourselves to take this place."

He left it as he spoke, and, stepping down into the aisle, took the seat in the minister's pew, where, in past years, Mrs. Ambery had listened to her husband's teaching. There was a stirring and rustling of the motionless figure beside me, and I saw Rebecca glance once at the minister's averted face. The deacons looked at one another in confusion and bewilderment, not knowing how to choose, and there ran a whispering from pew to pew; but, before any person had found courage to speak, Mr. Ambery rose from his seat, and, with tottering steps, moved to the minister's chair, and, standing for a moment to look round with a faint glimmer of a smile, sank down into it, leaning his silvery head against the purple cloth with which it was covered. He had always taken the vacant chair whenever our minister was absent; but could he sit in judgment upon himself? I kept my eyes fixed upon him, but his face was as tranquil and bright as was Stephen's in his hour of false accusation; and, while yet the church hesitated, he lifted up his voice, clear though feeble, and said, "Brethren, proceed with the matter in hand. Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?" One of the deacons, I mention no names, stated that thirty years ago, when the sum in question must

have passed into Mr. Ambery's hands, it was found that he had invested five hundred pounds in a mortgage upon a chapel, which he proved by a letter from one of the trustees of that chapel. Up to that time he had received from the church only the sum of eight hundred pounds, being one hundred pounds a year for eight years, during which he had been their pastor. Was it to be credited by men of business that out of eight hundred pounds the immense proportion of five hundred pounds had been saved?

Mr. Ambery listened attentively, but with a strange sad air of perplexity upon his face; and when the speaker came to a pause he answered nothing, but glanced round uneasily as if for some one else to speak. After a dreadful pause, he rose and drew himself up to his full height, stretching out his arms towards them with a look of tender entreaty, while his voice, thin and quivering, fell upon our hearkening ears.

"My people," he said, "it is I who have baptised you; these hands have broken the bread of communion among you; night and day have I borne the burden of your souls before the throne."

He paused there tremulously, and a profound stillness and shame fell upon the church.

"You ask me how I saved that money," he cried. "I tell you I denied myself everything that is desirable and pleasant to a man. I gave hunger, and famine, and loneliness, and labour for it. Catherine herself trod upon the verge of starvation to snatch it from the poverty which threatened us. I tell you men like you know not what self-denial is. We paid our full price of suffering for every portion of it. Behold now, here I am, old and grey-headed before you: witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed; whom have I defrauded? or whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it to you."

He stood before us with his hand upraised, and his eyes flashing back our earnest gaze; but before one could move the fire faded away from his face, and with a low bitter cry, which tingled in our ears, he sank down upon the floor, as one suddenly stricken by the hand of God.

Yes, stricken, but with a very gentle stroke: paralysed down one side, yet with his mind and his speech spared to him, or rather restored after a few days' lethargy. There was nothing marvellous about it after the great excitement and emotion of the troublous days; but there were some who, when the first shock was over, were not afraid to say there was a judgment in it. There was no other church meeting held, though nothing had been decided at the first; and still every one was reckoning and calculating whether the money could have been honestly gathered, or was, as Mr. Corbett's friends asserted, this very sum for which Mr. Ambery was trustee. And there was a great division of opinion in the church about it.

Of course, we were compelled to tell Katie all; and never did a more woful change pass over any young creature. She had come home to us a rosy, merry, sunny girl, such as it delighted my eyes to see, after bearing the burden of Rebecca's carefulness and anxiety; but, in that single day Katie grew blenched and sorrow-worn, as if the iron entered into her soul. No delay or dallying she allowed herself, but wrote at once to Harry Thompson, bidding him to find out the treachery practised upon her father, or to see her face no more; and then she closed her lips in utter silence about him, and going about the house the two or three days she was with us with downcast head and sunless face, it almost broke my heart to watch her.

There was nothing that I could not do for my children. It is no light thing for a woman of forty to think of marriage; but I sat down and mused upon all the troubles of my old master's family, and upon Joshua Lamb's house, and carpet, and furniture, until I reached out the writing-desk my children had given me, and wrote a note on a sheet of gilt-edged paper, inviting Joshua to come to supper that evening. I never saw a man relish anything more than he did the brace of partridges which I set before him, well cooked by myself, for he had miserable sort of cookery at home, in spite of his drawing-room; and when he was satisfied he leaned back in the arm-chair, and regarded me with a very earnest and grave countenance.

"Mary," said he, with a deep sigh, "how long are you going to make me uncomfortable?"

"Why, Mr. Lamb," I answered, innocently, "I'm sure I'm making you as comfortable as I can."

"Nay, Mary," he said, "you understand me well enough. Will you become my wife?"

He had never spoken so plain before; and though that was just what I was wanting to bring him to, there went a dither all through me as he spoke the words.

"Joshua," I said, after a while, "I'll make a bargain with you, and a promise. If you'll find out this roguery of Mr. Corbett's about old Mr. Ambery's thousand pounds, so as he shall not lose it, I'll be married to you as soon as ever you choose to ask me afterwards."

It is a dreadful thing to be under a solemn promise of marriage. I cried myself to sleep like a girl of eighteen that night; and after that I could hardly bear to see Joshua go past my shop-window, with a knowing smirk upon his cunning lawyer's face. Mr. Craig, also, used to go down the street as regularly as the day came, to pay a visit to poor old Mr. Ambery; but Rebecca avoided meeting him, and he never sought an opportunity to speak to her. I suppose he thought it was no time to talk of love just then.

If Harry Thompson and Joshua Lamb made any efforts to discover the roguery of Mr. Corbett, they both failed. Only, they said, only six years' instead of thirty years' interest could be claimed. This was some comfort.

Till the very last day I expected that the deed might be found, or Mr. Corbett's heart be changed; but nothing happened. I do not know whether the old villain could have got the money with all his craftiness; but Mr. Ambery would not go to law about it, while he had no deed to show, and all those suspicions were raised against his integrity. Rebecca wrote to Mr. Corbett, requesting him to come and receive the money in her father's presence; Mr. Craig and the long-headed deacon were asked to be present likewise; and Rebecca insisted upon me staying with her in the old minister's sick-room.

Mr. Corbett entered the chamber with the air of an apostle, ready to give every one of us his blessing. The long-headed deacon shook hands with him heartily; and I suppose Mr. Craig felt it to be his duty to submit to take his offered hand. But when he turned to old Mr. Ambery, who lay propped up on pillows, his thin, trembling fingers grasping a roll of bank-notes which fluttered in his hold, the tears ran down his white and furrowed cheeks. Rebecca stepped forward, and placed herself between him and the smiling villain.

"Be quick," she said, with a flash of the lightning in her eyes; "finish your iniquitous work, and go your way. But take you this word from me, The Lord God of recompenses, He will requite."

He shrank back, and muttered some words we could not catch; and Rebecca, taking the bank-notes from her father's feeble hand, counted them out one by one before him, the look of scorn gathering more and more upon her face, like the thick thunder-cloud. When that was ended, and the deed of release given in due form, she crossed the room without another word, and, throwing wide the door, beckoned to them to depart at once, and in silence. Even Mr. Craig withdrew, after casting one beseeching look at the white-faced, haughty woman, who closed the door with a snap, as if it would never be opened to any one of them again. I also went home, and wrote a letter upon black-edged paper to Joshua Lamb, bidding him never to think of such a thing as crossing my door-step any more.

Whatever the church thought concerning the matter, it did not withhold the pension of forty pounds a year to its old minister. Rebecca set herself, with more courage and less anxious care than of old, to make the diminished income suffice for herself and her bedridden father. She sent Nellie out into a situation like Katie's; and then began a long, dreary, lonely, laborious life, with only herself and the poor old master in the house. Mr. Craig continued constant in his visits, and at times won a little softening regard from Rebecca, which kept him on the verge of hope, just balanced between that and despair. But we found out long afterwards that Katie could not help relenting towards Harry Thompson; and they were carrying on a correspondence of heart-breaking letters about their circumstances, which comforted and cheered

them very much. As for Joshua, he would as soon have dared to venture into a lion's den, as to enter into my shop either for sugar-candy or cheese-cakes.

Many a person would say it was my fancy; but ever after that day, when he took the minister's money, Mr. Corbett shrank, and paled, and dwindled away before my eyes, until whenever he went down the street, with the woful shadow behind him smiting upon its breast, each time I saw the life slowly dying out of him; like the light goes out of the sky on a summer's evening. I noticed him muffling up more and more, and walking with feeble tread; and then there came a faint, hollow cough, which sometimes made him press his hand against his side. People counted to one another how many of his relations had died consumptive, and said how foolish it was of Harry Thompson to stand off from entering into partnership with him; and they reckoned up what riches he would have to leave behind him, poor, foolish wretch! Spite of all my wrath against him, I could not help but sigh, and shiver with a kind of awe, as from time to time he tottered past, looking more and more woe-begone, with the very look of anguish, which his shadow wore, settling now upon his own bland features.

It was getting on for twelve months after Rebecca and her father had paid away their treasured savings, when one day, in the dusk of the evening, Joshua Lamb tapped meckly upon my counter; but, before I could open my lips to order him off my premises, he began to speak glibly but humbly enough, not giving me room to put in one word, until he had told me that his miserable master was getting worse and worse, and wanted to see Rebecca.

I may as well be straightforward, if Joshua Lamb and Mr. Corbett were not. After some hanging back, she consented; but would not go without me. We were shown into Corbett's lonely parlour, where he sat amidst the gloom of crimson curtains, which cast a kind of rosy glow upon his white face. They could not conceal the wasted cheeks and sunken eyes, nor the glance of mingled despair, and shame, and agony, with which he met Rebecca's steadfast gaze. He was a man in years, getting on for sixty; but, till now, I had never thought of him with any more fellow-feeling or pity than I should have thought of the devil, God forgive me! Yet, as he sat there in his wealthy room, fading away from all his riches, alone and desolate, I could hardly refrain from going up to him, and shaking out the pillow under his grey head, and laying it down softly and gently for his wicked brain to rest upon.

"Thank you, Mary," he said, smiling; for he was that cunning yet that he could read one's very thoughts; "thank you, but never mind. Sit down, you and Miss Ambery; you would rather not shake hands with me. I am troubled about the old minister; he is an aged man, and he thinks he has something against me. Miss Ambery, I should die easier, and I know I am

dying, if you would receive that money back again from me as a gift."

Rebecca did not answer for a minute or two; while Mr. Corbett drew out a large pocket-book, and took from it several notes for a hundred pounds each, counting them aloud one by one. I knew how poor we were, and I felt dazed and giddy for very joy.

"No," said Rebecca, "I will not take them; they are the price of my father's good name. I will accept no gift from you, Mr. Corbett."

A spasm shot across his face, and he laid his worn hand upon his heaving chest, as if to strengthen him to speak again.

"Rebecca," he said, "I have known you since you were a little child, and I cannot bear for you, and Katie, and Nellie to come to want. I would rather give you the money than leave it in my will. Take more money. Take a thousand pounds apiece if you will have it. Take it, and I will consent for Harry to marry Katie." Rebecca stood up in her place calm and resolute, though her eyes were fastened upon the rustling bank-notes in Mr. Corbett's hand; while he watched her face eagerly, as if his soul's salvation rested upon her answer. She smiled at length, half in scorn, and half in triumph.

"It is a great bribe," she said, "and I loved money once, but it has no power over me now. Give me back my father's good name, and I will listen to you; but, till then, you may go on to offer me your worthless money, and I will say no to the last."

"Rebecca," he cried, looking affrighted at her, "give me your solemn promise that you will not betray me, and I will tell you."

"I will hear nothing that I cannot make known," she answered. "What you have to tell you shall write down, that it may be made known to the world after your death. So far I consent. Only let my father's name be righted, and I care very little about the money. May God have pity upon you, Mr. Corbett!"

He was too feeble to answer her anything; and I ran and made the pillows soft and easy under his head, before we turned to go away. Even Rebecca stepped up to his side, and took his languid hand for a moment in her own.

"Stay," he cried, gasping for breath, and he closed his fingers over hers, though he had not the strength of a baby, "you shall write it for me; only keep my secret till I am gone."

So Rebecca sat down at the table beside him, neither trembling nor faltering, and waited with her steadfast piercing eyes resting upon him, until he recovered himself; and receiving our solemn promises to keep his secret, he bade her what she should write upon the paper. It was to this effect: When Mr. Ambery resigned his office of pastor to the church, the trust-deeds, with other law papers belonging to the chapel, had been given over to Mr. Corbett's care, and that among them he discovered the lost deed of release, which the minister had kept with them, though belonging to his own private affairs. Furthermore, that when Mr. Thompson died, who was the last person then living that could bear

testimony for Mr. Ambery, he had been tempted of Satan to claim the moneys from him. The wretched man spoke clearly, and Rebecca wrote it down with a firm hand. Whereupon he rang and ordered Joshua Lamb to his presence, and without reading the paper to him he signed it, and bade him put his name to it as a witness. After which, with the precious paper in our own possession, we returned home rejoicing.

Mr. Corbett lingered nearly a month from that day, during which time I saw him often, for though we were in different stations, we were townspeople, and I had known him all my life; and I could not bear to think of him passing away with nobody but hirelings to smooth his dying pillow. Several messages I carried to him, full of kindness and gospel comfort, from the old minister, all ignorant as he was of the restitution the miserable man had made. He died at last without much feeling, either of body or mind, as most people do, whether they be saints or sinners; and the following Monday, being the ordinary monthly church meeting, Rebecca sent that paper to Mr. Craig for him to read before the assembly of the church.

She and I had never been to a church meeting since the charge was brought against Mr. Ambery; nor did we go to that. We were sitting together in Mr. Ambery's chamber, Rebecca near the window, looking up to the evening sky so peacefully, that there was no line of grief or care upon her face, when through the quiet house there rang a loud and earnest peal, which caused us all to start with affright, and I ran down stairs hastily to open the front door. There in the street stood the assembled church, with Mr. Craig at their head, and all the deacons pressing close after him, eager to follow him in. Mr. Craig put me gently on one side, and marched straight on with his company up into the minister's long deserted and desolate chamber. There was little need of speech. The weeping church, tongue-tied with shame and sorrow, yet smiling amid its tears, crowded round the old pastor's bed, begging pardon in sobs and choking words; until the long-headed deacon called upon Mr. Craig to be their spokesman. He went forward before them all, and standing for a minute or two speechless beside Mr. Ambery, while everybody was looking to him to confess their sorrow, he could do nothing else but stoop down, and press his lips reverently and tenderly upon the old man's wrinkled forehead.

I saw that when he lifted up his head his eyes met Rebecca's, and a glow and a flush, strange to both those grave faces, flashed across them for a moment. He lingered till all the church had departed, even to the deacons; and the last sound of footsteps had died out of the house. But as Rebecca, shrinking and nervous, was creeping away stealthily from his presence,

he placed himself in her way, and took both her hands in his.

"Rebecca," he said, speaking before her father and me, "do you love me?"

"Yes," she answered, hanging down her head.

"I am a poor man," he said, "and we may have to wait long."

"We will wait," she whispered, as Catherine her mother might have done many years to this aged, bedridden man, who then stood before her as her lover. Mr. Craig laid his lips upon hers, with as much reverence and tenderness, but with more passion, maybe, as when he had kissed her father beforehand; but I, knowing the mother's sorrowful, shortened life of toil and care, turned aside heart-sore for the two young creatures before me.

But their lot in life was to be easier than Mr. Ambery's and Catherine's. When Mr. Corbett's will was opened, though it made no mention of the paper which owned to one of his crimes of dishonesty and oppression, it contained a codicil, which left a thousand pounds apiece to the minister's three daughters, and it revoked the condition that Harry Thompson should inherit his wealth only if he gave up his marriage with Katie.

Before many months were past, Rebecca became the young minister's wife; and Katie only waited for a year or two more of discretion. Joshua Lamb professes to charge me with breaking my word, but my bargain with him was plainly enough that he himself should find out the trickery about the deed of release. At times I feel a little heart-sinking, lest he should bring an action against me for breach of promise of marriage; but he has nothing to show save those two little notes I wrote to him; and I feel there would be very little hope of happiness in marriage, if I had to be upon my guard all my life long.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER XLV. HIGH SCHOOL OF HORSEMANSHIP.

RANELAGH! Ranelagh! Are you quite sure? Ranelagh? Is the word no misprint, no clerical error? I think I hear the judicious critic ask this question as he reads the last chapter of this story, scratching his ear meanwhile. Then, he may haply fling the book by, altogether. Ranelagh! Come, this exceeds human patience. Had I said White Conduit House, that might have been barely tolerable. But Ranelagh! Why, that was a place whither Horace Walpole went when he was a beau, and the Miss Gunnings when they were belles. It was altogether an eighteenth-century place, devoted to periwigs, hoops, powder, patches, brocaded sacks, clocked hose, high-heeled shoes, fans, small-swords, cocked-hats, and clouded canes. Our great-grandmothers went to Ranelagh in sedan-chairs, and attended by little black boys. A certain Mrs. Annelia Booth (wife of a captain in a marching regiment, and known to a certain Mr. Henry Fielding) supped there one night, more than a hundred years ago, in company with a clerical gentleman who had a few words during the evening with a British nobleman.

To which I reply that I know what I am about, and that there is reason in the roasting of eggs. The place of amusement to which the Pilgrims repaired, after dining so well in Park-lane, shall be Ranelagh, if you please. This is an age in which the exercise of some discretion in literature is necessary. Your contemporaries will forgive everything but the naming of names. You may write and say the thing which is *not*; but beware of giving utterance to that which *is*. You know that the Memoirs of the candid Talleyrand are not to be published until full thirty years have elapsed from the period of his lamented death. Some few of the contemporaries of Charles Maurice, who might be compromised, are still alive; and the candid creature could be discreet, even in the tomb. For a similar reason, the place I have in my eye shall be Ranelagh. There are numbers of ladies and gentlemen still extant, and flourishing like green bay-trees, who have heard the chimes at midnight in Ranelagh's leafy orchards, and have occasionally taken slightly more lobster-salad than was

good for them in those recesses. So, let the place I have in my eye be Ranelagh; though, if you choose to get a private Act of Parliament, or the Royal Permission, or a License from the Heralds' College, or to exercise your own sweet will, there is nothing to prevent your calling it Tivoli, or Marylebone, or Spring Gardens.

Besides, did not a gentleman, a few pages since, make the profoundly philosophical, if not entirely original remark, that there was a river in Macedon and a river in Monmouth. How many Ptolemys were there? There may have been Ranelaghs and Ranelaghs. All were not necessarily patronised by Horace Walpole and the Misses Gunning. Is there not a London in Middlesex, and a London in Canada? A Boulogne in the department of the Seine, and a Boulogne in the department of the Pas de Calais? An Aix in Savoy, an Aix in Provence, and an Aix in Rhenish Prussia? An Alexandria in the land of Egypt, and an Alexandria in the state of Virginia?

At all events, all the Ranelaghs are gone by this time—your Ranelagh and my Ranelagh. Yes; the pleasant place is departed. The fifty thousand additional lamps are fled, and the garlands of flowers, real and artificial, are dead. The plaster statues have reverted to dust and their primitive gypsum; the trees have been cut down; their very roots grubbed up. Bricks and mortar invade the once verdant expanse of the Ramilies ground. No more balloons ascend from that Campus Martius. There are wine-cellaris where once the lake was; pantries and sculleries where once the panorama of Moscow raised its cupolas of painted canvas, profusely festooned with squibs and crackers, to the starlit sky. Pulled down, laid waste, and laid out again: such has been the fate of Ranelagh. Its present desolation of hods, scaffold-poles, and places where rubbish may be shot, seems even more dreadful than would be utter solitude and silence. Somebody Else—that ruthless and immovable Somebody Else—has got hold of Ranelagh, and turned it to other uses. May it, under its new aspect, be profitable to Somebody! It is certain that Ranelagh, as Ranelagh, never did pay Anybody.

Is it necessary to shed a few sympathetic tears, over the parterres, the fountains, the umbrageous alleys, the labyrinths and grottos, the supper-arbours, the long ball-room—over

the orchestra with its shelf-shaped sounding-board, and the little hutch beneath, where you purchased the creaming stout in brown jugs which might once have been Toby Philpots, and have lived in the vales? I should like so to weep, a little; but, unfortunately, there is no time to weep. The Pilgrims and Madame Ernestine, professor of the high school of horsemanship, are waiting. Let others mourn the fiddlers who were wont to wear the cocked-hats; the tipsy, fraudulent waiters, alternately cringing and abusive; the masters of the ceremonies, humble disciples of the school of the immortal S—; the money-takers; the gipsy fortune-teller and the prophetic hermit. They were all worthy folk, no doubt, but have disappeared. So have the petrified fowls at five shillings each, the ham cut so thin that it resembled the leaves of some fatty sensitive plant, and curled into shrinking convolutions when you touched it; the rack punch, so called from its fumes inflicting on you next morning the worst tortures of the Tower of London and the Spanish Inquisition; and that remarkable rose-pink champagne which never went round more than once, and never cost less than half a guinea a bottle.

It was M'Variety who, as Tom Tuttleshell correctly observed, had hit upon the notable device of opening Ranelagh in the winter, and at a shilling a head. The experiment was disastrous—every experiment ended, in the long run, at Ranelagh in catastrophe—but its commencement was not destitute of a certain brilliance. Thomas Tuttleshell had done M'Variety much good since the beginning of the winter season. He had made up many parties, and brought many lords there. He had interested himself with editors, and affably presided at a supper of the élite of intellect held to inaugurate the artificial skating pond. In fact, with the exception of the capitalist in the wine trade, who was losing his weekly hundreds in backing the manager of Ranelagh, Thomas Tuttleshell was M'Variety's dearest friend.

The manager was standing at the water-wicket, keeping, as was his custom, a very sharp look-out both on the pay-place and the free list box, as the party from the Pilgrims' Club alighted from their cab. It may be imagined how many cordial pressures of the hand he bestowed on Tom, and how many sweeping bows he favoured his illustrious visitors with. M'Variety was a man in a chronic state of bankruptcy, but who constantly arose, smiling and cheerful, as though refreshed by ruin. There never was, perhaps, a debtor who was so much beloved by his creditors. Those to whom he owed most were generally the first to help him to start afresh. It was the opinion of the capitalist in the wine trade—an opinion frequently expressed as he signed the weekly cheques—that it was no good crying after spilt milk; that a man could not eat his cake and have it; that you could not always be turning over your money ten times a year; and that there was a deal of meat on M'Variety yet. "Sir," the enthusiastic capi-

talist would exclaim, "if Ranelagh was to be swallowed up by an earthquake next Saturday night, Mac would have the neatest bill about the ruins (as patronised by royalty) to be seen at three o'clock in the afternoon and nine o'clock at night, out in Sunday's paper, that ever you saw. He is a man of spirit, sir, is Mac." So the capitalist went on signing cheques and sending in cases upon cases of the rose-pink champagne.

M'Variety always looked after his small liabilities, and let the large ones take care of themselves. He who would owe much, and yet live undisturbed, should always pay his washer-woman. It is astonishing when you owe a man thirty-seven thousand pounds to find how cager he is to ask you to dinner, and to lend you another three thousand pounds to make up the round sum. Mac always paid his small people. He never treated his underlings to an empty treasury. The ghost walked regularly at Ranelagh at three o'clock on Saturday afternoon, however spare the promenaders on Friday night might have been. Thus it came about that the small folks loved M'Variety, and that the master carpenter, to whom he had presented a silver snuff-box for his exertions in getting up the firework scaffolding for the panorama of Moscow, declared, with tears in his eyes, that the governor was the honestest soul he ever drove a nail for, and that if timber ever ran short in the gardens, he'd cut down Bushey Park (at the risk of transportation for life) sooner than the governor should want it. And finally, as Mac, whether it was hail, rain, or sunshine with him, always entertained a retinue of old pensioners, and took great care of an old grandmother (who considered him the brightest genius of any age) and two spinster sisters down in Devonshire, he was not, perhaps, on the whole, such a bad sort of a fellow.

"Tiptoppers?" whispered the manager to his friend, as he hustled officiously in advance of his guests.

"The very first," Thomas returned. "An earl, a baron, and a foreign count: no end of a swell. The conceited puppy," he added, mentally, to compensate for his slightly imaginative eulogium on Edgar Greyfaunt. It was a harmless peculiarity of our friend that he always gave his aristocratic acquaintances a step in rank. Thus, if you were a captain, he spoke of you as colonel; if you were an archdeacon, he made you a bishop.

"Sure I'm very much obliged to you, Tom," went on M'Variety. "Come and chop on Sunday?"

"Thanks. Can't promise, but we'll see."

"Well, I know you will if some other swell doesn't turn up. This way, gentlemen. You're just in time for the circus. Just a goin' to begin, as the showman said."

"Who is this Madame Ernestine, Mr. M'Variety?" asked Sir William Long, quitting Lord Carlton's arm to walk with the manager.

"Famous French equestrian, my lord. Just

arrived from Paris. Turned all the people's heads there. Pay her a tremendous salary."

"I am Sir William Long," the baronet said, quietly, "and should be very much obliged if you would tell me anything definite about this Madame Ernestine. I am very curious, indeed, to learn."

The manager indulged in a subdued—a very subdued—whistle. He glanced at the baronet's face, and saw that it wore an expression of earnest curiosity.

"Well, she ain't young, Sir William," he made answer.

"If she is the person I mean, she must be forty years of age, or thereabouts."

"You may bet your money on *that* horse, Sir William," acquiesced the manager. "Hope you'll excuse my familiarity, but I've always found the swells most affable. His Grace the Duke of Darbyshire comes here twice a week, thanks to my friend Tom Tuttleshell. Invaluable fellow, Tom. His grace wanted to drive his four-in-hand over the artificial lake, but I was obliged to refuse him, for fear of accidents, and the newspapers, and that sort of thing. Ah! you've no idea what a hard life mine is, and what a manager has to put up with. Those licensing magistrates are enough to worry one into the grave. Only think. That stupid old Serjeant Timberlake, the chairman, was nearly giving a casting vote against our shop, on the ground that skating was immoral, and that coloured lamps led to drinking."

"Believe in my sympathy, Mr. M'Variety; but this Madame Ernestine, now. You say that she is not young?"

"She's no chicken, and that's a fact; but this is, of course, entre nous. Ladies in her profession are never supposed to grow old."

"Is she handsome?"

"Makes up uncommonly well at night; doesn't spare the 'slap,' you know, the red and white," responded Mr. M'Variety, diplomatically.

"Can you tell me anything more about her? I have a particular object in inquiring, far beyond any impertinent curiosity."

"All communications strictly confidential, eh? Well, I don't mind telling *you*, Sir William, though it's against my rules. My standing orders to my stage-door keeper, when any questions are asked him by parties—and some have been asked by the very first in the land—about the ladies and gentlemen of the company, is to tell 'em to find out, and, if they ain't satisfied with *that*, to write to Notes and Queries. That generally satisfies the Paul Prys, and you don't know how we're bothered with 'em. Now, to tell you the honest truth about Madame Ernestine, she's about the most mysterious party I ever knew, and I have known a *few* mysterious parties in my time, Sir William."

"I have no doubt of it, Mr. M'Variety; pray proceed."

"I can't make out whether she's a Frenchwoman or an Englishwoman. She speaks one language as well as the other. She swears like

a trooper, and drinks like a fish, which ain't very uncommon in the horse-riding profession; but then she gives herself all sorts of fine-lady airs, and treats you as if you were a door-mat. She says she was married to a tremendous swell, an Englishman, who is dead, and that she is a lady in her own right. My treasurer, Van Post, won't believe it, and you'd find it rather hard to meet with a sharper customer than Billy Van Post. 'If she's a lady,' says he, 'why don't she go to her relations?'"

"Is she talented?"

"Clever as Old Scratch, to whom, I think, she's first cousin. But, to tell you the honest truth, Sir William, she's too old for the kick-out business. At her time of life, the swells don't care about seeing her jump through the hoops. It's time for her to cover up her ankles, Sir William. Tom Tuttleshell told her so, and she offered to knock him down for it; but we got her to listen to reason at last. You see, Tom found her out for me in Paris, and I pay her a thumping salary."

"But does it pay you to do so?"

"That's just it, Sir William. You'd hardly credit it, but it does pay tremendously. That ingenious fellow, Tom Tuttleshell, put me up to the dodge of the high school of horsemanship which he had seen at Franconi's. It's as easy as lying," pursued the candid Mr. M'Variety, "and it ain't far off from lying, anyway."

"What may this novel invention be?"

"Just this: You've got a lady rider that's clever—first-rate, mind, but passy. Well, you just put her into a riding-habit and a man's hat, and you give her a trained horse and a side-saddle, and she makes him go through all kind of capers to slow music, and the audience they go half wild with excitement. It's a new thing, Sir William, and tickles 'em. The British public are very capricious, and have got tired of the Three Graces on one horse, and the Swiss Shepherdess on her milk-white steed, and such like."

"And the high-school horse?"

"Perfection. When Tom first dug out Madame Ernestine in Paris, she was very low down in the world, going round the fairs, I have heard say, as a spotted girl, or a mermaid, or a giantess, or something not worth five-and-twenty bob a week, at all events. She was quite broken, in fact, and good for nothing but to make play with the brandy-bottle. Well, Tom saw there was something in her, and that she was exactly the kind of party for the high-school business, and he managed to pick up a horse from an Italian fellow that kept a waxwork show—Venti something his name was; and that horse and the madame have turned me in a pretty penny since I opened. I wish everything else in the gardens had turned out as profitably," M'Variety added, with a half-sigh.

"And the madame, as you call her, is a success?"

"Draws tremendously. As I warned *you*, she's no great shakes as to youth or good looks; but for pluck, action, and general 'go,' that

woman," the manager continued, confidentially, "may be considered a Ripper. Fear! She doesn't know what fear is. Five-barred gates! She'd take the wall of the King's Bench Prison, chevaux-de-frise and all, and leap over the Surrey Hills into the bargain. She's a Ripper, Sir William, and nothing but a Ripper."

"Is she alone—I mean, does she live alone?"

"Yes and no. Husband's dead, so she says. That I told you. The waxwork Italian says he's her uncle, but he's abroad. She has a fresh servant about once every fortnight, after she's broken the old one's head with a water-jug. Barring that, I think she's alone. Stay, there's a little chit of a girl that lives with her—a niece, or cousin, or dependent of some kind, though Billy Van Post, my treasurer, will have it that she's the madame's daughter. A quiet little girl she is, and would be pretty if she wasn't so thin and pale. Like a little ghost she is. The madame leads her an awful life."

And the name of this little girl?"

"There you ask more than I can tell you. My wife calls her a little angel, and the people about the gardens have nicknamed her Cinderella. She gets more kicks than halfpence from the madame; and I sometimes feel inclined to interfere, only we like to leave these foreign horse-riders to themselves as much as we can. The madame has a devil of a temper. Twice I've been obliged to go bail for her good behaviour at Lambeth Police Court, after she and the water-jug and her drossers have fallen out."

"It is the countess," thought Sir William Long. "Poor little Lily!" To Mr. M'Variety he went on, abstractedly: "It is pretty, very pretty, indeed."

The conversation to which I have striven to give coherent sequence, had in reality been made up of disjointed fragments strewn about by the voluble M'Variety as they wandered through the gardens. Long before its close they had entered the wooden pavilion fitted up as a circus, and ensconced themselves in the manager's own private box. Here Lord Carlton, after expressing to Tom Tuttleshell his opinion that M'Variety was a worthy, a very worthy, fellow, went placidly to sleep. Tom, who was one of the most placable of creatures, and had quite forgotten Edgar's offensive manner towards him, would have been very happy to entertain the young man with a lively description of everything and everybody connected with Ranelagh; but the sultan chose to continue superciliously sulky, and Tom, seeing that he was merely wasting his words, slipped out of the box, and had a walk round the gardens, where he found numbers of people who felt amazingly flattered and patronised by his condescending to talk to them.

Sir William Long was too much engaged with his own thoughts to notice the departure of Tom, or of the polite manager, who, when his guests were seated, withdrew to see after one of his thousand-and-one concerns about the gardens. Between the slumbering peer and

the simpering dandy—who was looking at the audience in the hope, and with the expectation, that they were looking at and admiring him—Sir William Long had ample scope to think. The memories came rushing over him. In the desert of a misspent life two or three oases started up. His remembrance went back to a dinner at Greenwich, to a little timid girl he had petted, and made playful love to, to a kiss he had printed on her forehead. How many years had passed since that dinner, and yet how many hundreds of times he had recalled it; how vividly he could recall its minutest incidents, now! Why? It was but an ordinary tavern festival. He had been at scores of similar revelries, in company as good, as bad, or as indifferent, since. There had been nothing about it out of the common. Nothing but the child who had sat by his side. And what was she to him: to him, a gentleman of wealth, title, and ancient descent? If she lived, and were indeed this Ernestine's dependent, she could scarcely be a woman, even now, and he was worn and grizzled. Why should his thoughts revert, again and again, to the childish playmate—the playmate but of an hour—whom he had kissed in the tavern hall?

"Here is the high school of horsemanship," remarked Mr. Greyfaunt. "What a dreadful old harridan in a riding-habit to be sure! She looks like Queen Boadicea addressing the ancient Britons."

The Swiss Shepherdess had whirled round the arena on her milk-white steed, scattering artificial flowers out of a kind of decorated milk-pail, and casting quantities of pulverised tan into the eyes of the groundlings. The Three Graces, in very short skirts, and somewhat faded fleshings, had likewise made the circuit of the ring on their solitary steed. The clown had uttered his usual dreary witticisms; and his colleague, rival, and deadly foe, a French grotesque, attired in garments of parti-coloured huc, had tied himself into several knots, grinned between his legs, knocked the back of his head against the small of his back, and uttered the customary ejaculations of "La, la!" to the immense delight of the audience. French grotesques were novelties in those days, and the mountebank in question was exceedingly popular.

The legitimate British clown stood apart, watching the gyrations of his alien competitor with intense disgust.

"That fit for a English king, is it?" muttered the Briton. "That's the sort of thing that's to go down at Windsor Castle, before the r'yal fam'ly and the nobility and gentry. It's enough to make a fellow take to the busking game, or turn Methody parson at once. I'd rather be a barker to a shoe-shop in the Cut than demean myself like that."

Here the volatile foreigner, whose head was turned by success, and who was plainly presuming on his popularity, came up to our British friend with his tongue out and "I say, mistare—" The clown, whose cockscorn was out of joint, administered to him the kick of

contempt, a little harder than he would have done to an English colleague, and grumbling, "I'll punch your 'ed after the fireworks, see if I don't," submitted to be touched up by the riding-master's whip, to thrust his hands into the pockets of his pantaloons, turn in his toes, make a grimace, and to propound, for the seven-teen-hundredth time, one of the seventeen conundrums he had carefully studied from a jest-book, bought at the stall, at the outset of his professional career.

I think it was subsequently to the performance of Herr Mooney, the spangled contortionist, who achieved such fame through his desperate efforts to swallow himself, that the celebrated trick act of the Young Strangler, from the Imperial Circus Samarcand, took place. Strangler used to appear, you recollect, as a British sailor, from which, by continual flinging off his outer garments into the ring, he was successively transformed into a parish beadle, Punch, a Scottish Highlander, Massaroni the Brigand, the Emperor Napoleon, and Cupid, God of Love. It was just after Strangler's second recital, amid thunders of applause at the close of his performance, that the band, which had been contentedly repeating, times and again, those good old jogg-trot airs traditional in all circuses I have ever seen all over the world, and which seems to have been expressly composed for horses to canter to, addressed itself to a very slow and almost lugubrious prelude. And then the heavy curtains which veiled the entrance to the circus from the stables were drawn aside, the barriers were thrown open, and Madame Ernestine, in a black velvet riding-habit, a shining beaver, a silver grey veil, and waving an ivory-mounted whip, made her appearance on her celebrated trained steed—a magnificent chesnut mare.

The high school of horsemanship required some time to be appreciated. In the beginning, it bored you somewhat. A long time elapsed before it seemed to be coming to anything. At first the movements of the trained steed induced the belief that she had got a stone in her foot, and was making stately but tedious efforts, always to slow music, to paw the impediment out. Then she slowly backed on to the edges of the ring among the groundlings, causing the women and children in the lower rows to shriek. After that she reared up, until her fore-hoofs seemed in dangerous proximity to the chandelier, and her long sweeping tail lay almost on a level with the dust of the arena. Then she curvetted sideways; then she went through a series of dignified steps, now approaching a gavotte, and now offering some resemblance to the menuet de la cour. Anon the musicians struck up a livelier strain, and the trained steed began to prance and to canter. The canter broke into a gallop, interspersed with sudden checks, with rigid halts, with renewed gallops, with desperate plunges, and which concluded with a terrific highflying leap over the barriers. The audience shouted applause. The grooms clambered on to the barriers, and held up between them a scarf breast high. The trained

steed took it easily, and bounded back into the ring. And then the music became soft and solemn and subdued again, and the docile creature subsided into gentle amblings, and almost imperceptible gambadoes. Such was the high school of horsemanship. It has been refined since then, and the leap over the scarf left out; but it still culminates in a sensation.

Sir William Long cared very little for the high school of horsemanship; but he never took his eyes off the horsewoman. She rode wonderfully well. She was evidently very powerful of hand, and had complete command (the which she exercised unsparingly) over her horse; but her movements were at the same time replete with grace. She flinched not, she faltered not when her charger was caracoling on a bias perilously out of the centre of gravity. She and the horse seemed one. She must have been Lycus's sister.

She was, more certainly, the countess who once used to live at the Hôtel Ratanaplan; the once-handsome lady who had dined at Greenwich, and taken Lily to be fitted out at Cutwig and Co.'s, and had left the child at the Marcassin's. She was the widow of Francis Blunt. "Yes," William said to himself, "it was she." Wofully changed in many respects she was; by age, perchance, the least; but there were the old traits; there was the old manner; and, at the heat and height of her horse-tricks, when the animal she rode was careering round the circle at topmost speed, there were audible above the sibillant slash of the whip on the poor beast's flank, the cries by which she strove to excite him to still further rapidity. And these were the same tones which William Long had heard, years ago, when the impetuous woman was angry or excited.

She had more than reached middle age, and her features, it was easy to see, had lost their beauty. Beneath the paint and powder, they must have been swollen or haggard, flushed or sallow. You could not tell, in the glare of the gaslight, the precise nature of the change which had come over her, or how she would look by day; but something told you that the change was an awful one. Masses of superb hair there still were, braided beneath her hat; but, pshaw! is not superb hair to be bought at the barber's for so much an ounce? But her eyes still flashed, and her teeth were still white, and her figure was still supple and stately.

Sir William Long waited until the high-school act had come to a close; and then gently woke up Lord Carlton. His lordship was good enough to say that he had spent a most delightful evening; but that he was afraid that the claret was corked. He also inquired after Thomas Tattleshell, and being informed that the excellent creature in question was below, in the gardens, remarked that he dare say Tom was looking up some supper. Which was the precise truth. Thomas had fastened on a special waiter, one whose civility was only equalled by his sobriety—a combination of qualities somewhat rare at Ranelagh, and at other places of

entertainment besides—and had instructed him to lay out a neat little repast in one of the arbours overlooking the covered promenade: something toothsome in the way of cold chickens, lobster-salad, champagne, and that rack punch, for the concoction of which Ranelagh had earned so world-wide and well-deserved a fame. The quantities of rack punch drunk at Ranelagh by his late Royal Highness the Prince Regent, assisted by Philip Duke of Orleans and Colonel Hanger! The statistician staggers at the task of enumeration.

The sultan was by this time weary of the horse-riding, and strolled down with his lordship, lisping flippant disparagement of the "dreadful painted old woman" who had presumed to inflict her forty years upon him. If the countess could only have heard that complacent sultan's criticism! There was life, and muscle, and devil in her still; and I believe that the protégée of La Beugleuse would have essayed to tear the dandy limb from limb.

Sir William Long was glad to slip away from companions with whom he had scant sympathy. The sleepy peer bored him; and Greyfaunt's arrogance and petit-maitre assumptions irritated him beyond measure: he could scarcely tell why. "I am growing crabbed and morose," Sir William reasoned; "my liver must be out of order. I was wont to be tolerant of puppies. This young fellow is not an arranter donkey than hundreds of his race who hang about town; yet his drawing insolence makes me quiver all over with a desire to knock him down. Decidedly we are as oil and vinegar, Monsieur Greyfaunt and I." He called him "Monsieur," the further to disparage him in the eyes of himself—the baronet of unmingled English lineage.

Fortuitously he met Tom Tuttle-shell returning beaming from his interview with the special waiter. He liked Tom, and, although using him, as most men did that obliging soul, did not despise him.

"Tom," said the baronet, "you are just the fellow to do me a service."

"What is it, Sir William?" asked Tom, who would have tried to jump through one of the hoops, or to attempt the high school of horsemanship itself, if any one had asked him affably.

"I want to go behind the scenes of the circus."

Tom rubbed his left whisker with a puzzled air. "I have heard of scenes *in* the circus," he rejoined: "but there are no scenes behind it, that I am aware of. There's not much to see in the place where the horse-riders go between the performances, if that's what you mean. Stables and sawdust, and grooms, and lots of people cursing and swearing dreadfully. Those horse-riders are a rough lot. Very dull and very dirty, and so on."

"Never mind what kind of a place it is. I wish to see it. Will you pass me through? or shall I ask Mr. M^r Variety?"

"No need to do that, Sir William. I'll get

you in, of course. I have the Open, sesame! all over the gardens."

Tom seemed to have the Open, sesame! everywhere. They used to say he had a master-key to the bullion vaults of the Bank of England, the tea-room at Almack's, the omnibus-box at Her Majesty's, the copper door in the wall of Northumberland House, and the cage where the crown is kept in the Tower of London.

He led the baronet to a little door of unpainted wood, on which were rudely red-ochred the words—"No admittance except on business." Sir William told him where to find Lord Carlton, and Tom, after sundry cabalistic signs and occult whispers which made it "all right" with the doorkeeper (who looked half like a groom, and half like a gravedigger, and was, in truth, by day, a kind of under-gardener and odd man, who looked about the parterres and bosquets of Ranelagh), went on his way, rejoicing.

This was not the first theatre, or semi-theatre, by many scores, to the penetralia of which Sir William Long had in his time gained admittance. From the Italian Opera House to the little dramatic hovels of country towns, "Behind the Scenes" was a familiar locality to him. From experience, he knew that the best course to pursue in these strange places was to keep straight on, until somebody halloed to him to stop.

He heard the loud, angry tones of a woman's voice; and he knew at once whose voice it was.

He was in a kind of alley, or sawdusted gangway, smelling very strongly of gas, orange-peel, and horse-litter, leading on one hand to the stables, and on the other to a range of closets rudely partitioned off with planks and used as dressing-rooms by the ladies and gentlemen of the equestrian company. He was bidden to "get out of the way there" by a groom, who was leading a very stout and peaceful Dobbin, with a mild, watery eye, a very round nose, and a coat covered all over with spots, like black wafers. This was the celebrated educated pony Rasselas, that played at chess (invariably checkmating the clown), drank port wine, and made believe to read the Supplement of the Times newspaper.

Stepping aside to avoid this erudite animal, Sir William found himself close to one of the dressing-rooms just mentioned, and the door of which was more than half open. A lady in a riding-habit, the trail of the skirt thrown over her arm, was standing on the threshold, her back towards him, and raging fearfully.

Her conversation and her ire were apparently levelled at some person inside the dressing-room.

"You nasty, lazy, idle, worthless little wretch," she cried out, "you've sewn the lining in my hat so badly that it all but tumbled off and ruined my act. Look at it—look at it, you slovenly little cat. Look at it, you good-for-nothing, do-nothing pauper!"

With which agreeable and considerate remarks she absolutely wrenched the unsatisfactory beaver from off her head, and flung it from

her into the dressing-room towards the unseen object of her rage.

Sir William heard a plaintive little sob from the dressing-room.

The infuriated woman suddenly turned her tongue over, and in a voluble scream proceeded to abuse the invisible offender in French.

"Où, pleure. Ça fera du bien, n'est-ce pas? Ça raccommode un chapeau de trente-cinq francs que v'là abîmé. Ah! tu me paieras ce chapeau-là, petite diablesse! Pleure donc. Toi et un crocodile c'est à pleurnicher à qui mieux mieux. Petite satanée, tu me sers encore un plat de ton métier. No me donne pas la réplique, ou je te flanque une paire de gifles. Tu l'as fait exprès. Exprès. M'entends-tu? Et ces palefreniers—qui sont bien les plus infâmes drôles du monde—sont là qui ricanent. Attends, attends! je vais te tremper une soupe, fainéante! Ma parole d'honneur, j'ai envie de te cingler les épaules avec ma cravache."

She made so threatening a move inwards, she made so ominous a gesture with the hand that held the horsewhip, that Sir William, who, although he could ill keep pace with, had understood the purport of her jargon well enough, became really alarmed lest positive outrage should follow her menace. He stepped forward, and, at all hazards determined to arrest her in her intent, laid his hand on her arm, and stammered out, "Madame! madame! je vous en prie!"

The woman turned round upon him with ferocious rapidity. In forcing her hat off, her hair had come down. Those tresses were not from the barber's at so much an ounce. They were her own, and were superb. But, with her locks streaming over her shoulders, and her bloodshot eyes, and the heat-drops pouring down her face, which Sir William could see now was coarse and furrowed, she looked like a fury.

"Cent mille tonnerres!" she cried out, "que me veut ce voyou-là?"

The situation was critical—Madame Ernestine was a lady evidently accustomed to the adoption of extreme measures. What business had Sir William there, then? What right had he to interfere with a lady with whom he was unacquainted, and who was merely scolding—her servant, perhaps? A horsewhip might not have been an unusual argument in use behind the scenes of a circus. Now that he had gone so far, what was to be his next move?

Luckily, Madame Ernestine evinced no immediate intent of seizing him by the throat, or of tearing his eyes out. As even greater luck would have it, M'Variety, the manager, came bustling up at this moment.

"What's the matter—what's the matter?" he inquired of an assistant riding-master.

"It's that thundering Frenchwoman again," replied the gentleman with the gold braid down the seams of his pantaloons, and the moustache whose lustrous blackness was due to the soot from the smoke of a candle, caught on the lid of a pomatum-pot, rubbed up with

the unguent and applied with the finger, hot. "Pon my word, governor, there'll be murder here some night—she'll knife somebody, and get hanged at Horsemonger-lane. The way she bullies that poor little girl who waits upon her's awful. This is the third time to-night I've heard her threaten to skin her alive."

"Oh, nonsense," rejoined Mr. M'Variety, who remembered, how well the madame drew, and wished to keep things as pleasant as possible. "It's only her temper." And he pushed his way by towards the scene of action.

"Temper be smothered," grumbled the assistant riding-master, retiring into a corner, and giving his whip a vengeful crack. "She's a regular devil that woman, and four nights out of six she's as lussy as a boiled owl. If she belonged to me I wouldn't quilt her! I wouldn't make the figure of eight on her shoulders with whipcord. Oh dear no! not at all."

"Mr. M'Variety," said the baronet, as the manager came bustling up, "you will infinitely oblige me by introducing me to the talented equestrian, Madame Ernestine, whose charming performance I have just witnessed, and whose acquaintance I am respectfully anxious to make."

Madame Ernestine appeared to be susceptible of conciliation. She courtseyed with her old haughty grace as the delighted manager ceremoniously presented Sir William Long, Baronet, to her; she even bestowed a smile upon him; but she took care to close the door of her dressing-room behind her, and to set her back against it, and, meanwhile, from the countenance of Sir William Long, Baronet, she never moved her eyes.

The manager, who was always in a hurry, bustled away again, and left them together.

"Ah! it is you," the woman said. "I have written to you half a dozen times for money, and you have never answered me. That was long ago, it is true."

Sir William explained that he had been abroad, sometimes for years at a time. Where had she written to?

"It does not matter. You did not send the money. You are all alike, you men. What do you want now?"

"Well, we are old friends, countess, and—"

"Bah! A d'autres vos sonnettes. What do you want with me now that I am old, and wrinkled, and fond of brandy, and cannot show my legs. You don't want me to dine at Greenwich with you now. I am ugly and coarse, and éreintée."

"Come, come, countess," pursued Sir William, "don't be cross. Whitebait isn't in, or we should be delighted to see you at Greenwich, I'm sure. You must come and sup with us to-night when you have changed your dress. Carlton is here. You remember Carlton?"

"I remember everybody. How old and worn you look. What have you been doing to yourself? You must have to pay dearly for your bonnes fortunes now. Nobody would fall in love with you pour vos beaux yeux."

She was unchanged, inwardly at least. The old, insolent, defiant countess.

"Never mind what I have been doing to myself. Will you come and sup? We will have plenty of champagne."

"Champagne! I am too old to drink champagne. I like cognac better. Well, never mind. We will have a night of it, as we used to have in the old time:

Eh gai, gai, gai,
La gaudriole!"

she sang, in an old cracked voice.

William Long could scarcely refrain from a shudder; but he continued diplomatic to the last. "How long shall you be changing your dress?" he asked.

"Half an hour. I must wash this paint off and put some more on. Il faut que je me fasse belle ce soir pour vous, mes beaux seigneurs. Wait until the fireworks are over, and then come for me to this door. Who else will be of the party besides Mifor Curzon?"

She rolled his name and title under her tongue, as though it were a sweet morsel, and had a delicious flavour to her. I dare say it had. She had been brought very low in the world. It was long—a weary, dreary long time—since she had consorted with lords. Now she felt herself again. She would so paint and bedizen herself, she thought, as to make it impossible for them to discover that she was no longer young.

"Tom Tuttleshell will be of us. You know Tom?"

"Do I know my grandmother? Histoire de l'Arche de Noé. Monsieur Tuttleshell and I are friends—business friends—of some standing. C'est un franc niais, mais il m'a été utile. Who else?"

"Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt."

"Connais pas. What a droll of a name."

"He is to all intents and purposes an Englishman; but his grand-aunt, a Madame de Kergolay, who brought him up, was a Frenchwoman, and died lately in Paris. Monsieur, or Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt, has inherited the whole of her fortune."

"A-a-a-h!" the countess exclaimed, drawing a prolonged breath. "It seems to me that I have heard some stories about this Madame de Kergolay before. An old hypocrite who stole children away from their parents, quoi? I should very much like to see this Monsieur Edgar Greyfaunt. Now go away, and I will get ready."

"Is there any one else you would like to bring with you to supper? Comrade, sister, any one?"

"I have no sisters, as you know, or ought to know by this time. Comrades, forsooth! Are you in the habit of associating with stable-boys? What men are here I hate, what women I despise. You have asked my director, I suppose? He is as avaricious as a Jew, and has robbed me shamefully; but otherwise he is bon enfant, and amuses me."

"We will take care to secure Mr. M'Variety.

But consider well. Is there no one else? Whose voice was that I heard in your dressing-room? Had you not a child—a daughter—years ago? She must be grown up by this time."

The countess made him an ironical curtsy. "Merci du compliment, monseigneur," she sneered. "Yes, I know well enough that I am growing old. Du reste, let me inform you that I am not in the habit of bringing my fille de chambre"—she laid, perhaps intentionally, a stronger emphasis on the word "fille" than on those which followed—"and that if you will be good enough to take care of your own affairs, I shall have much pleasure in attending to mine. I come alone or not at all. Am I understood?"

"Perfectly. Brava! you are quite the old countess—I beg pardon, the young countess—we used to know and call Semiramis. Come alone, if such is your will. Now, good-by until after the fireworks."

He was retiring, when she recalled him.

"Stop, mauvais sujet," she cried, "have you got a billet de cent francs about you par hasard? I want to buy some gloves."

Sir William laughed. "You will scarcely find the Burlington Arcade at South Lambeth," he said, as searching in his waistcoat-pocket he brought out some loose sovereigns and dropped them into the woman's outstretched hand. She just nodded her thanks, and going into her room shut the door.

The performances in the circus were over, and the workpeople were turning off the gas. The baronet had some difficulty in groping his way to the door.

"She has not changed a bit, save in looks," he soliloquised; "what a devouring harpy it is, to be sure! If ever the horse-leech had a fourth daughter, the countess must have been the one. How hungry she used to be in the old days after money."

Madame Ernestine, on her part, was also soliloquising. "Ah! I am Semiramis, am I? Ah! I am asked to supper because it is thought I have a daughter. Ah! pieces of gold are flung to me with a taunt, like pennies to a beggar. Little devil!"—she said this savagely, and not to herself. "Thou art sticking pins into me on purpose. Quick, my pink dress; quick, or I shall strangle thee!"

BLOOMSBURY BOUQUETS.

I HAPPEN to live near the gardens of the Horticultural Society at South Kensington. So surely as there is a flower-show held therein, as surely does my landlord receive a letter informing him that at the end of six months I shall resign my tenancy. The annoyance passes away with the departure of the last van that removes the extra marquees, and I revoke my decision; but while the affair is being prepared for, being carried out, and being carried off, my resolution is inflexible.

On the thirteenth of this very last July, a grand fête was held in those Horticultural Gar-

dens. I was first made acquainted with the intention at about the end of June, through the medium of my mare, who is of a nervous temperament, and who shied straight across the road on catching a glimpse of a very large and very pink posting-bill attached to the paling of the Society's gardens. I know the mare objected to the bill; I think she objected to the announcement which the bill conveyed. A fête spoils her day; she hates the crowds of carriages through which she has to pass, the bursts of drums and cymbals which come across her at intervals, the lines of carriages, the mounted police, and the fifteen hundred red-waistcoated cadgers who rush forward simultaneously and want to hold her head.

The horrible announcement, repeated in the Times of the next morning, was read by my sister Alice, aged twenty-one, who thereupon handed the paper to my sister Edith, aged nineteen, placing her thumb on the obnoxious advertisement, and commencing to work the eyebrow-telegraph. I, pretending to be absorbed in devilled kidney, was nevertheless conscious of being jerked at by both girls, and, stealthily looking up under my eyebrows, perceived Alice's mouth shape the words, "Ask him!" Want of sufficient moral courage on the part of Edith permitted me to finish my breakfast, to mount the mare, and to go forth with a sense of gathering storm. No mention of subject at dinner. Dance in the evening at Lady Pocklington's, Miniver Gardens. My sisters dancing perpetually with Charles Bury and his cousin Sir Something Hardwick. I gloomy, with a sense of impending misery. "Oh, Fred, Sir Something says, we must go to the next horticultural fête; it will be a darling; it will be so nice; everybody will be there, &c. &c. You know we have no chaperon but you, and you *will* take us, won't you?" In the same strain Edith, to the same effect Charles Bury and Sir Something. I, savage, though still with a feeling of relief that the storm has burst. "No! I won't! Can't! Business, work, previous engagement, all and everything; finally, I won't!" Girls sulky and disgusted, Bury and Sir Something evidently dying to kick me, and I triumphant, but remorseful and wretched. So, home from Lady Pocklington's.

For the next fortnight, civil war, perpetual skirmishes, alarms of trumpets, ambushes, and one or two pitched battles. At length, a flag of truce, in the shape of lace-edged pocket-handkerchief carried by Edith. Parley. "Was I still obstinate?" "That might be *her* word; I was still firm!" "I would not go to the gar—" "Certainly not!" "Then would I mind their going with Uncle and Aunt Naylor, then from the provinces, and staying at an Albermarle-street hotel?" I am mortal. When my own convenience is not molested I can be generous. Let Uncle and Aunt Naylor be sacrificed. Runt celum. I called on the Naylor, they were delighted, they "had heard so much of the place." So had I. I knew exactly what would happen, where the bands would be placed, what

tunes they would play, how the members of one would pull their brass instruments to pieces and blow through fragments of them and hold them up to dry, while the other band was playing. I knew what people would be there, and the moony conversation they would have, and the heat they would get into, and the desire that would possess them to lie down under the fountains and cascades. I knew how Alice and Bury and Edith and Sir Something would get separated from the Naylor, and how, after the old people had transformed themselves into purple water-carts in their stupendous endeavours to find them, the delinquents would turn up late in the evening perfectly cool, and say, "Why, where have you hidden yourselves? We have been looking for you for hours!" I knew all this, but I did not tell Uncle Naylor. He was going smiling to the sacrifice, and it was no business of mine to suggest that he had better prepare himself by feeling the edge of the knife. I had made up my mind what to do that day; I would call on Tom Cooper, and he should bring out that great raking chesnut of his, and we would go for a ride through Willesden-lane, across to the left over Acton and Ealing, and so round home.

The day came, cloudy but with every promise of sun and heat, promise soon fulfilled. I thought I would take a holiday from business, make a few calls, and then go and pick up Tom Cooper. I made my calls on people who were all gone to South Kensington, and having put up the mare, strode off, not best pleased, to Tom Cooper's office in Gray's Inn, and at once proposed the contemplated ride. Tom is a man of few words; he simply shook his head, and said, "No go, old fellow! I'm off to the flower-show!"

I caught up my hat, and said, "What, are you, too, going to this tomfoolery, Tom? I thought there was one sensible man left in London. Go to your Italian gardens, and your Life Guards' band, your plashing fountains, and your—"

"What the deuce is the man talking of?" interrupted Tom. "I'm going to no Italian gardens or plashing fountains. I'm going up to a local affair. My people live in Russell-square, and there's an exhibition of the plants belonging to the working classes of our parish, held in the garden of the square. It's a good thing! You had better come and see it!"

I remembered that I had read something about it in the Times, and I agreed to go and see it.

We drove through the good old Mesopotamian district, past Great Dowdy-street, Guiltless-street, Great Abnormal-street, and, passing Decorum-street, reached Russell-square, against the railings of which we found countless children clinging like bats. At a side-wicket was stationed the most harmless of policemen, who touched his hat with great deference to Tom Cooper, and admitted us into the glories of the square garden. I should like to take any reader of this periodical, blindfold him, turn

him round three times in the garden of Russell-square, and ask him where he was. I will wager a mild amount of half-crowns that not one out of fifty shall answer correctly. You look round you far through the hanging branches of big trees, you see no signs of houses, you hear no sound of the ordinary traffic, and when Tom Cooper told me that there were frequently four or five games of croquet carried on at once on the expanse of lawn, I received the information without the least astonishment, and could, if called upon, have affirmed on oath that the place known as Holborn must be at least a hundred miles away.

We proceeded through a throng of nicely-dressed people, past a band of volunteers who were playing the inevitable Faust selections in excellent time and taste, and into a big marquee, where the flowers were on view.

I am not good at flowers. I know roses, and fuchsias, and geraniums, and balsams, and convolvulus, and mignonette, and dahlias, and "old man." When I go to South Kensington and read Kapteorotix splendidiosus, I bow as on a first introduction. I have never met the gentleman before. But here, in Russell-square, I was among the friends of my childhood. I knew the elegant full-belled fuchsias, hanging with their bursting petals each over each, and drooping over the pots containing them; I knew the sturdy geraniums, with their scarlet flowers, their broad soft hairy leaves, their thick resolute stems; I knew the annuals, bright, and gaudy, and fleeting; and I pushed my way in among admiring crowds, and felt quite young again as I looked upon many a bud and leaf once familiar, but long forgotten. I was not critical in my judgment, but there were plenty who were; old men and women, doddering and placable, mechanics severely scrutinising each prize, and openly speaking their minds as to the justice which had awarded it, boys and girls swooping down upon the assembly with a pleasant disregard of corns. So through the tent, looking to the right and left, and remarking many excellent specimens of my favourite flowers. Outside the tent, a police band, all the members in blue coats and oilskin-topped hats; numberless young ladies in the most delightful of summer costumes, with young gentlemen to match, behaving as the youth of both sexes do under such circumstances; numberless rich old people bored, and stupid; numberless poor old people, wondering and dazed "which how they can wear them bonnets on the tops of their heads, and such rolls of 'air be'ind, good gracious!" numberless poor children; save those who were evidently exhibitors, there did not appear to be many poor people of middle age, they were mostly veterans or children, interspersed among the promenaders. And it was one of the curious sights of the day, to witness how thoroughly at home the children made themselves, and how, in the blessed ignorance of childhood, they utterly ignored any deference to the powers that were. They sat in little knots under the trees, and played at being owners of the ground; and they

played at a game which culminated in the height of the fashionable promenade, so that gentlemen bowing over the (in many cases) extensively jewelled ears of their inamoratas, were nearly flung to the earth by a little infantile procession running in and out among their legs, the members whereof were shouting, "Thee's thimble Thally, and the'th thold her thop," and with outstretched forefingers and hissing voices invoking oburgations on the said Sarah. I believe that heretofore the presence of a number of boys in muffin caps has not been considered essential to the success of a flower-show; I am bound to say that those young gentlemen added in no small degree to the enjoyment of ours.

Before quitting the garden, I had some talk with the genial and earnest honorary secretary of the flower-show, and learned from him some of its statistics. This exhibition at which I assisted was, it appeared, the fourth exhibition of the Bloomsbury Bouquets: the first took place at a private house in Little Coram-street; the second at the National School; and the third and fourth were, through the kindness of the inhabitants, held in Russell-square Garden. They are self-supporting; there is no touting, nor sending round of the hat; there are fifteen hundred shilling tickets subscribed for by the well-to-do parishioners; and that amount, with the shilling charged for admission to casual visitors, and five hundred entrance tickets for poor parishioners at a penny each, amply cover all expenses.

The candidates for prizes are divided into four classes: 1st. Persons living in the Little Coram-street district. 2nd. Persons living in other parts of the parish. 3rd. Domestic servants. 4th. Children in national, infant, Sunday, parochial, and ragged, schools. To each of these classes, prizes for the best fuchsias, geraniums, and annuals, varying from ten shillings to one shilling, are offered. There is also a set of prizes offered for the cleanest and most tidily kept rooms. Some six weeks beforehand, the district visitors invite candidates, whose names are inscribed; their rooms are liable to visitation at any moment between the entry and the judgment, and those who are successful are rewarded with a money prize. I was told that the committee generally had a difficulty in awarding this prize, so good were all the candidates. There are between two and three hundred candidates for the tidy-room prize; between four and five hundred competitors at the flower-show.

So I went to a flower-show after all? I confess it, and I learned something from it. I learned that the great arts of fighting against adverse circumstances, and of suffering and being strong, were practised among a certain portion of the poor with an exemplary patience worthy of all emulation. It had been my lot, in previous years, to live in that Bloomsbury district, and to groan and complain at the absence of all floral cultivation; yet here I was charmed by finding excellent flowers of my favourite kinds, grown under very unfavourable circumstances, in a very inferior portion of the identi-

parish. If the district visitors were to come to my study, I don't think they would give me a prize for a tidy room! We live and learn! I am not so rabid against all flower-shows as I was. The Bloomsbury Bouquets have taught me a lesson.

BEN'S BEAVER.

A PIONEER settler in the woods of Canada has need to be a man of brave heart and strong hand. We had been five years on our Canadian farm, and we had "a frame house" as fairly fitted for two families as two flats in Paris one above the other, or two dwellings joining in a semi-detached villa. My eldest brother had the wife of his choice, and two fine boys. We had thirty acres in corn, grass, fruit, and kitchen garden. This conquest of the woods made the two brothers next to the eldest very uneasy. They wanted a world to conquer, and I remember when Walter, the eldest, now eighteen, said to my father, "Give John and me ten shillings each to buy axes, and we will never ask any more of you. We will give you a receipt in full for our inheritance."

"And may well do so, if you have your health and can fetch your food from home for a while," said my mother.

The result was, that the two boys started, each with an axe and a knapsack, for a place called "Thug's Hollow," ten miles into the dense forest east of our home. The tract of land, comprising a fine waterfall, had been bought by a man named Sugge, and he intended that his claim should bear his own name; but he lisped and called himself Thugge, and other folks called him what he called himself, and hence the ugly name was fastened on a very lovely valley which is now a beautiful and prosperous village, long ago emancipated from forest trees, beavers, blackened stumps, and its bad name.

On the mill-stream, where now stand the mills of my victorious brothers, Ben's beaver was caught in a box trap. He was a baby beaver, or he might have known better than to intrude into the small room that became his prison, for the bribe of a sweet apple. The colony of beavers that had built near where the corn-mill now stands, had been fastened out of their house, and all shot, by my brothers, while they were trying to get in at their own doors. It was a cruel and profitable job, for beaver skins then brought a very high price. Not one was left alive except baby Brownie, who was given to Ben by reason of his great love of four-footed pets. I went over to see the beavers' house, built of small trees, or saplings, which they cut down with their chisel-like front teeth, and floated into position in the water. The dam, as well formed as if men had built it, the warm dry rooms of the dwelling with their soft lining, the treasures of bark and bulbous roots for food in winter, all were wonderful to me. The boys had watched them at work for some days before

they commenced destroying them. They had seen them cut down saplings to repair damage purposely done to their dam. They had floated these to the place where they were wanted, and then, lifting the stick upon the fore-leg, as a man takes a burden on his arm, they had put it in its place, very much after the manner of a monkey. Many have said that the beaver carries burdens on his tail, and that he uses it as a trowel. My brothers were not able to verify these assertions. They were of opinion that though the tail may be used sometimes to brace the animal, like a fifth leg, or to hammer their work into place, yet that it is not used as a trowel or a raft. Perhaps the time they allowed themselves for observation was too short.

I took notes of Brownie for a long time, and he soon grew to be a big beaver, and very tame. He was one of the most cheerful and affectionate pets in the world, and, though he ate bark and bulbous roots readily, his favourite food was bread and milk; if it was sweetened, it was a special and delightful treat.

One of our neighbours was remarkably fortunate in finding horses that had gone astray. On being asked for the secret of his sagacity and luck, he said: "I always fancy myself a horse, and think of what I would want if I was one, and where I would go to get it." If I could fancy myself a beaver, I might hope to explain some of the singular doings of Ben's. He loved my brother so dearly, that Alice (my brother's wife) was almost jealous of him. It was impossible for Ben to separate or hide from him. On one occasion, Ben left home to go to Plattsburg and Whitehall, on Lake Champlain. This lake is nearly one hundred miles long, and has many steam-boat landings on both sides: being at its widest not above six miles across. The beaver was left at home, but when Ben went up to his room at the St. Alban's Hotel, he was met by Brownie, who showed no signs of fatigue, and indulged in the most extravagant expressions of joy. Ben rewarded his attention with a dish of bread and milk, of which he ate about one-half, and then laid himself to sleep on his master's valise. He changed to his master's feet when my brother was in bed. In the morning Ben missed him, and the remaining portion of the bread and milk. "Brownie has gone home," said Ben to himself. That night he stayed at Plattsburg, on the other side of the lake; when he retired to his room, after taking supper in the ordinary dining-room, there he found Brownie on his valise again. Again there was a joyful meeting, and an eager consumption of bread and milk and sweet apples. This time there was none left for breakfast. Still Brownie disappeared early, and not until Ben reached Whitehall was he again visible. It is to be noted that in all the distance travelled by this beaver, from our home, there was water. Brooks and a small river took him to St. Alban's, and after that he had the lake. The beaver is a poor traveller on land, and does better by night than by day. Much of the work of beaver colonies is done in the night. But, Brownie

followed his master by day, and made the same speed as the boat, and always knew where to land. The animal has powerful means of water locomotion in the hind feet: his tail he uses as a rudder.

Who or what told Brownie that Ben was to land at Whitehall, I cannot know, but there he was, ready to pay his ardent respects to his master's pocket, for the sake of a sweet apple.

My sister Alice had hoped when she married Ben to reform him of his passion for four-footed pets, by furnishing substitutes; but he went on the principle of "the more angels in the heart the more room," only he read babies and beavers instead of celestial beings. I remember Mrs. Ben's rueful expression of face as she exclaimed, "O dear! Brownie is a nuisance. He has built a dam in the parlour, of the fire-irons and fender and a music-stool. He has made a double-roomed house at the back of it with two ottomans, and lined them with the leaves of my last music-book. And then he has stolen my dried sweet apples, and laid them up for his winter's provision. But he is welcome to them now, for who would eat them after he has messed them over! Indeed, Ben, he is a nuisance."

"We are all nuisances sometimes," said Ben, "beavers, babies, and grown men and women."

"I wish you would speak for yourself and Brownie, and not for me and the babies, Ben," said Alice, laughing.

"Look at him!" said my brother, as Brownie combed himself with the claws of his hind foot, making his toilet as carefully as a cat, or a lady. We all did look at him, and we all forgave his mischief, and admired his neatness, sagacity, and affection. All the world forgives the pets and favourites when they serve or amuse sufficiently to pay their way.

The end of poor Brownie was tragic, and no settler in Canada has been more sincerely mourned. To this day, a tender sadness fills my heart when I think of him. He was mistaken by a hunter for a wild beaver, when the hunter was on an excursion with my brother in the backwoods. He was shot. Ben got his skin and had it stuffed, and to this day it is kept as a parlour ornament in my brother's Canadian house.

FRENCH VIPERS.

La Belle France, sunny France, the land of wine and song, of the dance and joy unconfined—except by an easy zone of police restriction—who ever thought of it as a land of vipers! The viper exists, indeed, in England, which is merry, but he flourishes in France, which is gay. Something of his French manners and customs, the highways and byways, the life and times of him, gathered from recent publications, and personal observation, shall be set down here.

Of this, its only venomous reptile, France possesses three species, the Aspic, the Pelias, and the Ammodytes. To begin at the beginning:

Their fecundity is fearful, the female bringing forth (as the family name viper—viviparous—implies, alive and not in the egg like other serpents) twelve, or a baker's dozen at a birth.

In early babyhood, this pretty offspring spring back through the opened jaws into the maternal interior, as temporary refuge from danger. This simply protective system of the female has been falsely construed, by hostile human critics, as a destructive system of filicide on the part of the male. Let us be just even to ophidians. The "subject of this memoir" attains his full majority in his seventh year, and a contemporary aggregate length of flat triangular head, clear defined neck, blunt body, and brief tail, of about two feet. Attached on either side to the upper of his loose-jointed, flexible, elastic jaws, and within the line of the teeth, is a fang, sheathed nearly to its needle-sharp point, when in a quiescent state, by an extension of the gum. It is not unlike in shape, and in pro and retractile faculty to a cat's claw. Through it runs a canal fine as a hair, to the reservoir of poison at its base. The reservoir is supplied by a continuation of the duct back to the secretive gland or arsenal, which is situate among, and protected by, the temporal muscles. At the root of each fang lies the germ of another, ready for quick development. If the first be broken or torn out in heedlessly fierce conflict, as with a sportsman's boot, or a swine's tough hide, the aspic retires within his lines, or to winter quarters. There the glands secrete new ammunition to supply the exhausted charge of the reservoir, fine calibred fangs are refitted, and everything is prepared for the next campaign.

The flat triangular head and other parts of the body are covered with scales, whose form and arrangement furnish the clearest marks of distinction among the three species, and of their distinction from the comparatively harmless adders and other serpents.

The ground colour varies extremely within each species and their subdivisions, through all shades of grey, yellow, red, black, and their respective *ishes*, down to a dirtyish whitish. Over the ground colour, whatever it may be, save black, lie designed in darker tint, on the head a more or less defined V—the family initial—and following that, either pantherine spots or tigersque stripes harmonising with a dorsal line from neck to tail.

The doctrine of *signatures*, so celebrated in the schools of the middle ages, is now fallen to vulgar practice. The essence of it consisted in the belief that the Father of all had set the antidote always near the bane, and kindly indicated, by signs visible to his simplest children, the use and appliance of the former to the latter. And so those plants which in form or colour bore likeness to the viper's shape or spotted skin came to be called "Viperines," and much esteemed in the old scholastic, as they still are in vulgar therapeutics. Baleful, striped and spotted serpents, correspond to the striped and spotted formidable enemies of

man in the higher animal realm; while lower down, in the vegetable kingdom, we find the weirdly striped and spotted stalks and leaves and flowers of baleful plants. And again, in a subtler, profounder analogy, felt by all people, and stated, though not analysed, in all languages, the speaking multitude, unconscious of the poetry of their daily phrase, and the inspired writing poet, express moral purity by spotlessness; to them virginity is immaculate; stripes are the symbol, as they are the horrid proofs of slavery; freedom is equality, uniformity.

Aspic and peliade look much alike at first glance, and feel much alike at first bite. So that different witnesses offer, for and against either, charges that really lie in common against both. One authority reports, as proper to the peliade, a greater venomousness and agility, which another attributes as specific quality or defect of the aspic. The contradiction comes of generalising from local or other accidental conditions, such as season of the year, hour or temperature, or atmospheric quality of the day, the Cassius-like leanness or recent fullness of the viper. The royal psalmist, aptly enough for his purpose, compares backbiters to "adders, whose poison is under their lips." The difference—which is important—is to the moral disadvantage of the former, whose force of malice grows by what it feeds on. The better, creeping reptile's store of venom diminishes not only at every hostile attack, but by simple process of deglutition. He cannot have swallowed a hapless frog, owing to his muscular mechanism, without having expressed in the process a certain portion of the virus in the reservoir. So that an aspic is like any one else after dinner, a more amiable creature than he is before meals. Again, if he have already bitten or bit at A. and B. at noon, C. gets off with a comparatively harmless nip towards sundown.

Of the three species, the aspic is the most prevalent, the pelias lamentably so, and the amodytes rarest in France. The last-named, who wears a specifically distinctive wart on his nose, affects the warmer countries, and is hardly found except in the south-east of France. From the others—unless it be a strip lying along the British Channel and the Belgian frontier—no large district of Napoleon's home dominion can be said to be quite free; while in certain departments of the east, south, centre, and west, they are a swarming pest.

A few years ago the prefect of a certain department, liberating himself by a vigorous effort of common sense from the benumbing coils of administrative habit, caused a bounty of fifty centimes (fourpence-halfpenny) to be offered for every dead viper. In a few months twelve thousand heads were brought in. The department of La Haute Marne, in North-Eastern France, has an area of two thousand four hundred square miles—say a third larger than Kent or Somersetshire. A like price having been set there on vipers' heads in 1856, by 1860 more than fifty thousand had been paid for. But so far was this official slaughter—let

alone gratuitous private assassination—from exterminating the enemy, that in 1861, when the bounty had been reduced one-half, seven thousand and thirty-six triangular heads, ugly sight bills, were presented at the paying bureaux. The Baron de Girardot, prefect of La Loire Inférieure, in 1859, on growing occasion of accidents befalling men, women, children, flocks, herds, and sportsmen's dogs (the excellent administrator's zeal was quickened by that of the mighty hunter), addressed a circular to physicians, health officers, veterinary surgeons, and others in his department, asking information on the serpentine question. Among other responses, he received this from the mayor of Boussay; its statements were re-confirmed to Dr. Viandgrandmarais by the curé of the commune: "In August, 1859, at the Clemençière, a farm-house built a few years before in the marshy part of Boussay, there was a prodigious number of serpents roving all over the establishment, hissing in the walls, hanging over the doors. A woman killed eight of them one day. It was found, on careful watching, that they issued from under the hearth. Investigation in that quarter led to the discovery of such a quantity of eggs, that a double decalitre (a measure of about twenty wine quarts) could not hold them; and beneath the stone were fifteen hundred live serpents of different sizes." These, it is true, were not of the venomous sort—mere innocents, comparatively—though at the fireside their room is pleasanter than their company. Dr. Avenel, of Rouen, says he has "counted a hundred vipers asleep on a space of a hundred metres square." The ingenious Mr. Toussenel writes in his last book—so amusing, despite its gloomy title, *Tristia*—that, in the summer of 1829, he killed more than two hundred on an estate of a few acres in the valley of the Loire; and again, that in 1861 he knew, by his own experience or from that of brother-sportsmen, of fifty places in other departments "where thirty and forty vipers were killed of a morning." "They swarmed in the farm-yards, and courts, and garden plots." He cites an occasion where three of his dogs were bitten within five consecutive minutes; whereupon in the next following fifteen he and his two companions did to death twenty aspics. From a letter written in the last days of March, 1861, by the proprietor of a brick-kiln near Angers, he quotes as follows: "I have been using a new kind of fuel for brick-baking—to wit, aspics. You must know that all the snakes of the neighbourhood had gone into winter quarters among my fagots, so that I could not deliver these to the flames without consigning to the same fate an innumerable multitude of hissing spirits, that swore and danced in the furnace like so many devils in a pot of holy water. I don't know what had become of us, if we had put off the kindling to another fortnight."

If you seek other proofs of the "deluge of aspics" than are to be read in print, they are not hard to find. If, taking heed to your steps,

and to the sustenance of your character as inquisitive traveller, as you walk through the garden-land "beside the murmuring Loire," or the shady lanes of the Bocage, or the generous vineyards of the Côte d'Or, blessed of Bacchus, or the hill country of the Doubs, or through half a dozen districts of France, whose bold or gentle natural scenery and storied châteaux and varied wealth of association make all your ways their ways of pleasantness by day, you question country folks in the field; if, as you sit in the village auberge, whose excellent cuisine and spotless table and bed linen enable you, despite its dirty floors, to thankfully "shut up in measureless content" at night, you question members of the house or by-sitting guests, their answers, often set off with curious dramatic incidents and picturesque expletives in rich patois, will fill your note-book with "snake stories."

"Vipers," says Dr. Soubeiran, "are generally the first reptiles to leave their retreats, as they are the last to enter them when the cold advances." With the falling of heavy frosts, they look out for dry quarters under the moss, in the fissures of rocks, in the hollow trunks of trees. They consider fagot-heaps as most eligible lodgings, also the close neighbourhood of stables, of furnaces and of other fireplaces, industrial or domestic, whither they are drawn by the warmth. There they pass the winter in a state of torpor, like old rentiers—not snugly rounded head to tail like Savoy dormice or American woodchucks, circled emblems of a complete economy that makes both ends meet, never in want of a meal, each one to himself his own preserved meats—but lying in confused intertangled mass, a hideous communism. It is a happy natural provision for the ophidian, which certain of the ill-fed, ill-dressed circles of the human order might envy him, this faculty of resting in a hungerless state of coma through the period which otherwise would put a full stop to his life. For he is exclusively carnivorous in his diet, and his provisions de bouche are chiefly made up of bats and rats, field-mice, moles, frogs, lizards (small birds for a delicacy), and insects, most of whom retire with him, or sooner than he, from the walks of public life into as close a privacy, or to another world. Insects, especially coleopteræ, form the almost exclusive nourishment of the juvenile viper—his spoon victuals, so to speak.

And so, with these fulfilled, he wriggles off to bed for a five or six months' nap. Should the winter be exceptionally mild, as in 1820-30, he may creep out of a warmish day to stick an artist making winter sketches in Fontainebleau forest, or a folded sheep, or stable-yard boy, or other conveniently-exposed party, just to keep his fangs in; and the following summer will be noted as an abundant viper season. If, on the other hand, the frosts are unusually rigid, as was the case in 1789, his still life is like to change into a pure and simple *nature morte*. Then huntsmen and their dogs, shepherds and their flocks, barefooted little gardeuses de

dindons and the rest, go more safely a-field the following summer. Then you will not be so apt to hear the farmer's complaint that red Nannette's teats have been stung, and her wonted rich creamy milk all turned thenceforth to thin boarding-school blueness.

Snakes make ready to quit their winter lodgings by All Fools' Day; not moving far from them till the hotter weather, when they wander unrestrainedly. Their fashionable hours of promenade are after the dew is dried. Country folk know this, and so cut grass for their cattle in early morning. During the mid-day fervour they take siesta, coiled on the ground in the sun or bedded on a warm rock; hanging sometimes in the broom and on bushes, as it were in a hammock. The wart-nosed ammodytes occasionally affects trees—as if mindful by some half-preserved family tradition of the old primal serpent's mischievous performance in that kind. Under the slant afternoon sun they go up and down the earth again, seeking what they may gobble, and then early to bed. Are they night crawlers? The indelicate question has been raised, but seems settled by weight of testimony in the negative. At worst, it is only rare, belated members of the family who are found out after twilight. Night-hunting dogs and cattle left abroad are next to never stung by them. Individuals have been seen in water; but they are generally averse to that insipid liquid, and on the whole prefer dry and rocky grounds to marshy places, though lamentably frequent in some of the latter. The prevalence of the asp in certain localities, of the pelias in others, and their common presence in still others, would seem to have some relation to geological conditions of the soil: but there has as yet been no sufficiently large and thorough investigation of this curious point to warrant positive conclusions.

The venom of the Gallic viper is similar in quality to that of other poisonous serpents, but happily inferior in quality. In one respect, however, he is more dangerous than the North American rattlesnake, moccasin and copperhead, inasmuch as he does not give noisy notice of his presence like the crotale, nor exhale so strong a warning odour as the other two. But he is a friend of humanity compared with some reptiles of his class in the East and West Indies and in South America, such as the jararaca and rattling boquirá (*crotalus horridus*) of Brazil. The imprint of the boquirá's fangs on the human skin is a death-warrant to be fulfilled within an hour. A full-grown French viper does not have, when his stock is complete, more than about two and a quarter grains of poison on hand. Of this he will hardly discharge at one stroke more than a sixth part. The wound, then, unless repeated and under "favourable circumstances," will not be fatal. Among these circumstances are, on the reptile's part, the season of the year, the electric state of the atmosphere, his degree of irritation; on the patient's part, age, sex, previous state of physical health and moral temperament. Of two hundred and three

case occurring in La Vendée and La Loire Inférieure, noted by Dr. Viandgrandmarais, twenty-four were fatal; of the twenty-four deadly cases, fifteen befel children, six women, and three men. Prompt intelligent treatment would have saved the lives of twenty in the twenty-four. The sting—for it is more aptly called sting than bite, seeing that the sharp darting fang has neither the form nor function of a tooth—makes a minute, scarcely visible puncture, less painful at the instant than the sting of a wasp. Presently the wounded part, oftenest at the extremities, begins to swell; the swelling extends up the limb, on which livid spots appear; nausea, vomiting, dimness of sight, vertigo, nervous spasms, prostration, insensibility, are the following symptoms of the progress of the virus through the system. The recovered patient is liable to a return of them in milder form—a sort of anniversary celebration of his accident—for years after, at the season corresponding to that of its original occurrence.

A few simple remedial measures are worth noting here. First and foremost, prevention and cure in one, is cauterisation with the hot iron; nitrate of silver and other chemical caustics are next best worth “exhibition.” If you are wounded at an hour’s distance from village doctor, apothecary, or blacksmith, bind your handkerchief, neckerchief, knapsack strap, or what not—not too tightly—about the limb, a few inches above the wounded part; suck it, open it freely with penknife, and squeeze out the blood; plunge it in cold water. Then if you have a flask of brandy or other spirituous refreshment at hand, drink freely; if tobacco in any shape, masticate fiercely *without* expectoration. In other words, take any stimulant (don’t forget coffee, in France), sudorific, or vomitive, and remember that you can safely bear a triple dose. The cold water checks rapidity of absorption in the system, and may coax out a portion of the virus. In parts of the southern states of North America, on some Georgia plantations, for instance, infested by rattlesnakes, it is customary for the overseer, when he goes a-field with the slaves, to provide a jug of whisky, or a phial of ammonia or “alkali,” for instant application within and without in case of accidents. Phials filled with similar antidotes, and furnished with a sharp-pointed stopple to carry the healing liquid directly into the wound, I think you may now purchase of the apothecaries at Nantes. Finally, and as quickly as possible, go to the next medical man. The “natural doctor,” in his default, may be consulted. You will find one in most villages, generally a shrewd old practitioner, with a reputation of being a bit of a sorcerer.

It is hardly a century ago (1752) since Dr. Carlihan, chief of the hospital St. Barbe, at Bel-fort, making large use of vipers in his pharmacy, tried to acclimatise them in a neighbouring ground. The receipt of the Theriaca Andromachi, a famous antidote, to which Andromachus, Nero’s body-physician, added vipers for increase of efficacy, was preserved in the British

Pharmacopœia till the beginning of this century. Dr. Hebard’s proposition for rejecting it was carried, in a most learned assembly, by only fourteen voices against thirteen. Dr. Paris, writing in 1825 about this venerable farrago of seventy-two ingredients, says: “The Codex Medicamentum of Paris still cherishes this many-headed monster of pharmacy in all its pristine deformity, under the appropriate title of *Electuarium opiatum polupharmacum*.” There is still a pretty trade between Parisian dealers and viper-hunters in the provinces; a part of the venomous wares goes to the composition of the ancient theriacs, a part enters into the little pills of modern homœopathy. *Similia similibus curantur*. Viper broth is a favourite prescription with the Guérisseurs de Venins, Rebouteurs, Conjureurs, Sorciers, and other such-titled undiplomaed professors of the healing art.

Happily for the lay commonalty, besides pre-fects and apothecaries, French vipers have numerous natural enemies. The park of Château Vilain, writes Madame Passy, being most perilously infested, the proprietor introduced a squadron of wild boars, who soon made a promenade there tolerably safe. But the park was also remarkable for its excellent truffle grounds. The boars being fine gourmands, and preferring serpents aux truffes to serpents au naturel, made as sad havoc with the delicate vegetables as with the vipers, and in 1857 were killed off for their greed. Thereupon the pests increased again so rapidly, that two years later other boars were turned on again, to restore a tolerable balance of evil powers. That highly-intelligent, grossly-maligned companion of man, whom, at least in stomach—an essential part—he resembles more closely than any other of our inferior fellow-creatures, the domestic swine, fairly dotes on snakes. American crotals, Gallic aspic, venomous or innocuous, they are all welcome grist to his mill. If, perchance, they manage to prick through his tough hide, they are like to lose their fangs for their pains, while the virus rests a harmless deposit in the underlying fat. They are equally foiled by the fur and bristles of badgers and hedgehogs. Dogs, unless trained to the business, do not seek the conflict, and are constant victims of attack.

I have grateful memory of a canine comrade of boyish strolls in New England woods in pursuit of berries, nuts, and the end of holidays; of a short bureau-legged, tight-crimped tailed, parti-coloured dog, the mongrel goal of as many and multiply criss-crossed races as enter into the ancestral composition of any modern resultant European nationality. He was, to use the figurative language of the country, “death on snakes.” With ears erect, sharp precatory bark, and eyes alight with Napoleonian glance at the situation of the hostile body, he would spring and catch it by the middle, then whisk it to and fro, like a Gorgon’s flying tress, with such rapid violence that before the unlucky ophidian could collect his senses they were fairly shaken out of him. Being presently done with the first

part of his programme, Puggins would announce his victory in a series of brief *Veni, vidi, vici*, bulletin barks, punctuating with crunching bites at short distances along the victim's vertebral column. Finally, if the field of battle were not too far from home, he would take up the spoils in his jaws and bear them, head and tail trailing low on either paw, into the house-yard triumphant. There he would, before nightfall, paw out a grave, then with infinite pains push the soft earth over the interred reptile, patting it down delicately with his blunt nose. Very jealous he was of interference at this ceremony; so that if we juveniles assisted too nearly and openly, he would withdraw the corpse and recommence the funeral rites behind the wood pile or under more retired raspberry-bushes.

Storks, crows, choughs, hawks, kites and other wild birds, and many domestic fowls also prey upon our subject. The common barn-door hen, set on by maternal passion, will attack and conquer, then, with feminine zeal, pick to pieces the insidious enemy of her chicks, and, clucking triumphantly, call them to eat of him and make their little hearts strong. Ducks, turkeys, and geese, the innocentest, stupidest, likewise boldly chase, kill and devour the symbols of cunning and wisdom, their light feathers protecting them against the fiercest biting.

And now to coil up this too long-winding essay with what good words can be said for the French viper. To begin with, he is not a seeker of quarrel, does not sting unless provoked. True, he is "something peevish," as Mrs. Quickly would say—rather easily provoked; can't abear, for example, to have his tail trodden on, nor to be sat on, nor squeezed, nor crowded, nor have sticks and things poked at him. Who of the prosiest best of us, let alone irritable poets, do like such treatment? Our noble Norman ancestors thought him a fit instrument of human, the editio vulgata of divine, justice, committing their condemned to dungeons infested with his company. The viper has been grossly maligned by that delightful old gossip Herodotus, by the poets, and by vulgarer fabulists, when they charge the parents with filicide and the offspring with parricide, on scant observation and no proof. It is a libel on the ancestors of the French aspic to lay to any one of their accounts the death of Cleopatra, Iras and Charmian, who—besides that those females were no better than they should be, if as well—were doubtless done to death by a cerastes, a small malicious horned serpent. Charitable apologists furthermore claim that vipers do good service to the common cause by destroying a great variety of vermin and other noxious parties. Probably *these* have also their uses, and will find their apologists. The general economy of nature still remains to the profoundest of our purblind investigations a marvellous system of checks and balances, of conservatively killed and killing. A poet, wise beyond science, aptly sang long ago the inconclusiveness of our conclusion:

Great fleas have little fleas,
And less fleas to bite 'em;
These fleas have lesser fleas,
And so on ad infinitum.

In far wiser, higher strain, another sings his grandly humble

Trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill.

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete.

The serpent with his tail in his mouth, has passed for an emblem of eternity, because of its endless circled completeness. The viper destroying itself by its own mortal poison, is a subtler emblem of everlasting life, because of its symbolising the self-elimination of mortality: the suicide of Death, *Mort à la Mort*.

HARLEQUIN FAIRY MORGANA!

It was about four o'clock of a Monday evening (to be particular), and only three days after the festival of Christmas-day (to be a little more particular); when the atmosphere was still pleasantly charged with particles of plum-pudding; when a fresh, inspiring, and, on the whole, not disagreeable darkness was setting in; and when up in London, some five miles off, the marvellous lamplighters were busy—how wistfully did we in our youth regard the delightful agility of those acrobats, and how often lament, when meditating a choice of life under the school blankets, that we could not be sent into *that* profession instead of being designed for Church, Bar, or Medicine!—I say it was at this season of the year, and this particular season of the evening, that word was passed down the playground that Young Peebles was wanted by Old Bridles in the parlour. The first of these descriptions referred to myself, and was scarcely distinguished by nice logical accuracy. For, I had not to be kept separate from any other Peebles, young or old, and the adjective, though characteristic, was mere surplusage.

Old Bridles, though familiar and verging on the disrespectful, was more happy as a popular personal portrait. He was known more awfully as the "Rev. J. C. Bridles, D.D.," who was prepared to receive a limited number of youths into his family, to be fitted for the learned professions," the youths of more tender years being subjected to the immediate personal superintendence of Mrs. Bridles: a supervision, however, whose benefits she kindly extended to all the young gentlemen of the establishment.

The personality of Young Peebles (so I *must* call him) took his way slowly and without enthusiasm, to the presence of Old Bridles (for so, too, I must call him). A few days ago, alas! it had been different. The ceremonial of being cited to the awe-inspiring parlour had then become riotously frequent; crowds were rushing in—that

direction. But now the place had lost its reverence. The boarders were going home en masse; all excepting Young Peebles, and a few colonial young gentlemen. The father of Young Peebles had been obliged to go abroad for health's sake, and so I (Young Peebles) was left with Old Bridles.

During this festive time Doctor Bridles fell into a kind of paternal manner, which fitted him uneasily. He was now in the parlour, in his curule chair. He held a letter in his hand. "Peebles," he said, "I have sent for you." (This I knew.) "I have sent for you," he repeated, and his face assumed an expression of severe Roman majesty, which was kept among the parlour properties for situations of importance. I grew uneasy in my mind. There was that guilty business of two parlour apples—débri of the parlour dessert, spoliated mysteriously—and spectres of the purloined fruit began to disturb me. That had been six weeks ago; but it was known that the school police was always vigilant, and that a statute of limitations was not to hold in shielding malefactors from the offended laws of their country. I, Young Peebles, trembled before Old Bridles. The revulsion was tremendous, when, instead of calling in the lictors, the doctor said, in his grandest manner, "Peebles, you are to go home!" Something like a whole magazine of squibs, crackers, and yet more magnificent Catherine-wheels, seemed to have been suddenly discharged at my feet. The parlour became filled with light, the bells began to ring, the music to play.

When the details came out, it was found that I was not going home, strictly speaking. It was Plusher—Plusher who had married my own and best loved sister—Plusher the noble, the brave, the gallant, the beautiful—Plusher of the Dog,* who had come forward in this splendid manner, at the last moment, but not too late. To say the truth, I had privately reckoned on Plusher all along, and had been deeply wounded—wounded to the quick—as Christmas-eve wore on, and I found Plusher not coming forward in the brave handsome way that might be expected from Plusher. Yet it was more in grief than in anger; and it was only when all hope did indeed seem fled, and when Plusher was proved by all human calculation, and the arrival of the last train, to be false, that I fairly gave way—that is, repaired to a private place and howled mournfully. And yet, even then, the glaring inconsistency in Plusher's behaviour struck the youthful mind. Why so surpassingly brave, generous, noble on one occasion, and now—? Perhaps there was some evil agency at work—a cloud or a fiend (either would do)—and before I would tear him from my heart, perhaps— But I am afraid I did tear honest Plusher from my heart that very night when retiring to my lonely pillow.

However, he had now redeemed himself nobly,

splendidly, superbly. He was John Plusher still, which of course he would have been under any circumstances. But he was the *old* John Plusher with three times three, and nine times nine, and English hearths, and homes, and the British Grenadiers.

In a flurry and a flutter truly delightful, and with the pistons of a small portable steam-engine thumping up and down over my heart, I left Doctor Bridles's roof. I did not care to affect the decent grief which, as part of the deportment at parting, the rules of the establishment required. I went my way with unconcealed joy; the doctor measuring me with his severest Roman eye. Ah, what days of delight those old days of going home!—the moments devoted to packing—to the agitated, disordered, imperfect process, known as packing. There was none of that skill or science in the operation which comes later with personal responsibility. For then all our property was in trustees: held to our use as it were, and at the peril of those clothed with the trust. Charming function! And how pleasing that flutter, that palpitation of the heart, verging almost on symptoms of disease; that exquisite feeling of unrest and inquiet which was almost painful, and yet was acceptable. Delicious ceremony of "going home!"

John Plusher welcomed me at the station, waiting patiently with a stick under his arm, carried much as a cavalry officer carries his sword, and a face so alight with good humour that it looked as if he had got some one to hold a wax candle inside! Noble, honest John! but I did not tell how my faith in him had faltered. He wrung my hand, and addressed me cheerfully. (He always seemed to speak in a series of short modulated shouts.) In the cab he mapped out a whole programme of entertainments, graduated in a sort of series, and something allotted to each day. Such Eastern liberality made me literally gasp, and I could only murmur uncouth sounds, meant for thanks, proceeding from me in a half savage state. I was not fluent by nature; and could only exhibit my gratitude in a gamut of "Ohs," increasing in intensity. The banquet was indeed bewildering; the waxwork, the voyage in the balloon (on the dioramic principle) which would take us to visit the principal cities of Europe (how delightful when the canvas moved on slowly, a little wrinkled, and the music began, and the gentleman-like lecturer announced that the next "voo" would depict the Halt of the Caravan in the Desert!); the Crystal Palace, the Polytechnic (including a real descent in the diving-bell), and oh! I began to breathe thickly as he named that place of Paradise, THE PANTOMIME!

I am afraid, when I thought so affectionately of going home to honest John Plusher, some gorgeous picture associated with this class of entertainment was before my eyes. Perhaps the notion was mixed. Once before I had been taken to this splendid spectacle; and though

* See vol. ix., p. 253.

them of very tender years; and with sensibilities scarcely developed, the impression left had been of something so exquisitely unearthly, so paradisaical, that I could never look back to it without an uneasy feeling reaching nearly to pain. I durst not dwell long upon it, as I was accustomed to do upon other matters, in the little apartment, under the blankets, where I used to cover up my head. And though, knowing John Plusher so well as I now did, I might reasonably have expected liberal behaviour from him, still I felt that these rarer and exquisite joys were uncertain in their fruition, and that the cup might be dashed from my lips at any moment. An ill-omened rumour had reached me that my sister—who had, very properly, influence over John Plusher—had began to think plays sinful, and was actually sitting under the Reverend Puncher Hill, minister of the Little Tabernacle.

But these were idle visions. As we drove along in the cab, I reassured myself. Not only was I to go to the pantomime, but I discovered by a line of adroit cross-examination, that even my best beloved sister, Mrs. Honest John Plusher, would likewise attend. The line of adroit cross-examination was something after this fashion:

"I say, Cousin John"—this was not an accurate description of the relationship, but I always called him Cousin John—"I say, does sister like the Reverend Puncher Hill?"

"No!" said Cousin John Plusher, with amazement. "Not that I know of! Who is he? Where did you pick up that name?"

"Nothing," I said, breaking down at the opening of the adroit cross-examination, "but I thought she went to him."

"Lord bless me, no,—at least," added John Plusher, "not that I know of. Why should she go to him?"

"O, to hear him," I said.

"Why should she hear him?" cried John Plusher, a little bewildered. "What is to be heard from him?"

"O, the pulpit," I said.

"Not she," said John Plusher; "we both go to the parish church, to good Mr. Burkinshaw."

"O then," I said, joyfully, "she will go to the—the PANTOMIME." (I always felt an awful agitation in naming this word.) And Honest John, though scarcely seeing how this conclusion could flow from the abstraction of the Reverend Puncher Hill from the question, said heartily, "To be sure she'll go; we'll all go, and make a jolly party of it."

More than that. It was revealed presently that a night had actually been fixed—the following night. More again than that. Places had been secured at the regular box-office, and of the regular person: who sat, with mystery, in a hutch off the street, and, strange to say, kept his wits, and was calm, though having the prerogative of admitting enraptured gazers to view the delights which lay behind. John Plusher took out a pocket-book and showed me the real tickets—one, two, three, four, five—all pink

and stiff. There was a halo or nimbus round each, and I handed them with reverence. Box voucher too: "Mr. Vernon, Box Book-keeper." Melodious description! And then the little note, by way of warning or caution, "Seats will not be retained after the first act," whose significance I could not bring home to myself even after deep and painful thought. For how *could* I realise to myself the existence of Beings so constituted as not to arrive at the doors of the theatre, hours *before* the first act had commenced.

The interval, though dragging at times somewhat wearily, yet, by the agency of various Christmas joys, passed with surprising swiftness. Some toys were brought in by Honest John: notably a drummer who played by turning a wire winch in the grass and gravel on which he stood; and, more notably still, a real locomotive, which by the agency, I believe, of secret clock-work, flew round and round on the floor at a frightful express pace. The sensation produced by this ingenious effort of mechanism was a source of unabated pleasure, until, strange to say, after only a few hours' traffic, it broke down (I now believe from over-winding), and never could be got to work upon the line again. Any attempts to repair the machinery were only met by alarming whirring sounds from the interior. These helped the day forward. But, in all justice, it should be mentioned that very much lay upon the noble foundation of all Christmas joys—plum-pudding. The sight of this delicacy, both cold and in fried slabs, which were the conditions of its second visit to John Plusher's board, did much to allay impatience. And, indeed, so hearty was my appreciation of its merits in the slabular shape, that I must make the humiliating confession that I came to regard this cherished friend, for a few hours afterwards, with feelings of loathing and repugnance.

I had asked John Plusher to purchase for me a Bill of the performance, that I might study the leading features at leisure. He had done so. A sort of heavenly programme, printed in blue characters, with a fragrance that seemed to exhale from it. The blue—though it *must* have been ordinary printing ink—seemed to glow with a gentle cerulean light. Even the thin tissue paper, so soft and gentle, as it were, was in keeping.

I read every word of it—that is, I and another boy, Choppercross by name, who listened in stupid wonder (and terror also, I believe) as I read aloud to him the list of glories we were to enjoy. It was like the music of an orchestra. The superlatives and rapturous expressions of personal self-laudation, in which I have since remarked these productions indulge, were like full chords. The name was "HARLEQUIN FATA MORGANA; or, The Lovely Fairy Bright Eyes." The overture and "incidental music" was by Mr. Burchell; the "new and sumptuous scenery" by Mr. Marsh Mallows; the costumes by some

one else; the tricks and mechanical effects by some one else; the monstrous heads were under some one's personal superintendence; in short, I was struck with awe at the enormous number of persons, each representing departments, who had contributed to the gigantic work. It did not occur to me at the time that this might have been the intended effect of these announcements. I saw, too, that the "Choreographic arrangements" were by Miss Robespierre, of the Royal Conservatoire, Brussels, and that the ballet would be full and efficient. And then the scenes, each so lusciously described! There was the interior of Mother Bunch's Cottage, with old Mother Bunch herself, and other characters with delightful names. Then, came the Fairies' Glade and Bowers of Pastoral Delight; then, a room in the king's palace; and so on—until we reached the "Matchless Transformation Scene!" Then I saw that the "Unrivalled Merlini Family were engaged to give due effect to the Harlequinade." I may say many hours of the day were consumed in devouring this enchanted document. It was a nervous time. Even so early as noon, I and the boy who was my contemporary began to have uneasy apprehensions as to being late, and moved about in a restless troubled way. At four o'clock, too long restrained by judicious remonstrance, it was resolved to commence the toilette for the night. This, it need scarcely be said, was on a splendid scale: the appointments and properties being of the most sumptuous description. Dinner was a pure feint. I almost felt indignant with Honest John Plusher for the calm and unfeeling manner—the as it were purposely protracted fashion—in which he consumed his food. At last the moment came; the cab was at the door, and we—I and the Contemporary Boy—rushed down with a cry of relief.

Five of us in all—John Plusher, Mrs. John, the Contemporary Boy, and a male friend of habitual good spirits—all went in, or *on*, the cab; for the Contemporary Boy was put outside with the coachman. We were hours getting to the Palace of Enchanted Delights (I believe the time consumed was a little over ten minutes), but we did get there at last. A stately building, with columns, lights, an air of excitement, and, oh! light bursting from within, and the old delicious inexpressible fragrance of commingled gas, damp sawdust, and squeezed orange-peel.

But when we trod the Gallery of Enchantment, dotted round with scarlet doors, each with a sort of peep-show glass inserted, and met crowds of delighted creatures tramping round like ourselves in a disordered procession, and who were gradually let in at the little red doors, and when Mr. Warbeck, one of the most polite and first-gentlemanly of creatures, whose manners seemed to me the true ideal of all that was courtly and gracious, came in a hurry with keys, and threw open for us a little door (some previous confidential solemnities having passed between him

and Cousin John), then I and the Contemporary Boy rushed headlong and tumultuously down to the very front row into the very bosom of the theatre. Theatre! Far too earthy a word. Soft realms of celestial light, happiness, and joy! The light ambrosial—the gay colours of Paradise—and bright circles, not surely of men, women, little girls and little boys, but of men, women, and children glorified. It was the all-suffusing light that did it.

There was a play. Not yet had fashion swept away the old custom of introducing the festival with some sound fruity old 'comedy of a didactic sort—even with the story of the unhappy 'prentice of the name of Barnwell. Barnwell was not to-night; but a delightful drama, softly mysterious and absorbing—The Castle Spectre! Ever welcome, even now, when the sense of romance has grown dull and the varnish is scoured off. What an interest in that artfully-constructed story! How grand the chief villain, Earl Osman, in the white furred cloak; and, as a picture of unscrupulous ferocious obedience, how wonderful the faithful black—Hassan, I believe, was his name. And the Castle! And the Friar! And the comic person! And Angela—the persecuted Angela! And the escape through the window when the blacks were absorbed in dice! And the Spectre! And the music!

But what were these pleasures to what was to come, when the overture to Harlequin Fata Morgana struck up, and all the funny tunes I had heard on the organs came artfully stealing in, popping up one after the other like old friends playing us tricks. And then, when the last chord had sounded, and the curtain drew up slowly, and revealed the interior of Old Mother Bunch's Cottage, with implements of cookery on a gigantic scale, and an enormous kitchen-range, with a gigantic cat sitting by the fire, and Old Mother Bunch herself—a terror-inspiring creature in a peaked witch's cap—I say, when we saw this prelude, forthwith I and the Contemporary Boy became fascinated, enthralled, bewildered, and drawn into one absorbing devouring gaze towards the stage. Round and round about us were little heads, peering, I *now* recollect, just over the edge of the boxes; and below the little heads wore bits of bright scarlet border and velvet jackets; and when the cat ambled about, or scratched its ear, after the manner of real cats, the little heads shook, and were agitated brightly, like silk shot with silver, and round us rang out the music of laughter in a high key. But for me it was otherwise,—it was *too* delightful, too seriously absorbing to laugh at. And now—Mother Bunch's home dividing in two, and sliding away with all the monster kitchen utensils—to the right and left, breaks upon us the Glittering Glade of the Fairies, and the Valley of Golden Foliage! And with the appearance of that dazzling retreat, and seat of exquisite delight, came my Fate.

Only think! A glade whereof the trees and

branches, reaching as far as the eye could go, were all of yellow molten gold, and the whole bathed in a rich effulgence, half yellow, half pink! This prepared me for the cloud of angels dressed in floating clouds or vapour (not, surely, muslin?), who glided out from among the golden trees. But alas! it did *not* prepare me for HER, who, after the divine creatures had performed some motions and groupings of their own—exquisitely graceful—came tripping down from the very end of the glade: the Fairy Queen herself, with a glittering silver wand in her hand, dressed in blue vapour shot with silver, the surpassing lovely Queen Morgana herself! At that moment I felt a feeling—I can only liken to a sort of wrench—at my heart; and oh! from that moment I was an undone m——, boy I mean. A divinity, surely, hired secretly from somewhere up in the regions we heard of on Sundays (was this sinful?), merely to come down for a short span and then return! Her arms, not purely arms, rather the imperfect development of wings; not flesh, but a kind of divine pink essence, illuminated from within! And those—those—supports on which she floated, now hither, now thither, of ambrosial pink, and also illuminated from within! Oh! if feet (for I could not wholly shut out the idea) they must be called, were they not spiritualised limbs? It was not walking, but floating. What motions! What curves! What flying in and out among her subjects! As I said, from that moment I was a gone m——, boy I mean.

How obsequious, servile almost, were the fairies to her slightest wish—as, indeed, was very fitting. How they spread out like a human fan, like a human star; how they floated and drifted to the sides, and left the divine visitant in the centre—as, indeed, was only fitting. How gracious she was in her dominion—how charmingly soft and even winning in her commands, for one gifted with such awful powers! Then when the dancing set in, and ravishing music played, and she floated and swam and rose and sank, all in the air, the element natural to her, my bewildered senses became enthralled, until, at last, two dark terrible screens came together on each side, joined in the middle, and the golden vale and the golden trees, steeped and bathed in liquid light, were shut out from view. Alas! so too was the ambrosial fairy queen.

The procession came on now, the soldiers with the monstrous heads, some rueful, some idiotic, with halberds on their shoulders, tramping in to a comic march, and last the testy king—was he named Grungrowdowski the First?—all filling the house with peals of convulsive laughter. The little heads were rolling about as if filled with mercury; the Contemporary Boy, who had before shown a tendency to acute spasms of mirth, now fell into a sort of agony of laughter, and dropped back suffering much. Honest John Plusher was roaring loudly, as his peculiar manner was; but I—I believe to their wonder—remained unmoved. The spectacle of the idiotic,

or even rueful beefeater, did not affect me; I gazed at the antics of the beefeaters stolidly, steadily, stupidly, and mournfully. I had a load of lead upon my heart—I felt a wistful aching that this poor grimacing could not satisfy. I was thinking of *her*, longing for *her* to return. And so the comic procession was re-formed, and danced off as they had danced on, the testy king last of all, performing what I suppose was conceived an exquisitely funny dance by himself, for he was called on to do it again, with frantic screams. I never even smiled. I was longing for him to be done, and was delighted when he skipped away to the side with a stupid jump and became lost to view—for I was looking anxiously for her to reappear. Now, surely she would come again. But no!—it was an Open Country, with a mill and a bridge, with a miller, and a procession of men carrying sacks. The miller, and his men also, had heads all knobbed and pink, like a particular growth of potato, known, I believe, as the kidney. Everything they did was welcomed with screams, especially when the miller himself tumbled into the stream. But in this merriment I *could* not join.

I was getting unutterably low-spirited. Even the Contemporary Boy, now well-nigh rolling under the seat in hysterical convulsion, for a moment looked at me strangely and seriously. Honest John Plusher whispered, "What's up, Jack?" but I put him back impatiently, for, at that moment, crossing the bridge, was a figure meant to be that of an aged crone disguised in a sort of domino and hood, but whom I, with a marvellous instinct, recognised as the exquisite ambrosial creature from above. This marvellous instinct was in some degree assisted by a glimpse of a glittering raiment, as it were, of liquid silver, hidden underneath; but I knew her at once. For the time I felt an inexpressible relief, and when, for the purpose of requiting the miller's daughter's humanity, she ultimately revealed herself in all her true celestial essence (as I said before, not mere flesh, surely, but something in the nature of manna, or of pale pink sugar illuminated from within), I gave way to my feelings in a torrent of delight. Short-lived happiness! She presently passed away, and then came the stupid comic thing again, and the beefeaters, and fresh palace interiors, and then a dark place, with many people huddled together, and then *she* appeared again out of the ground, bearing her silver wand, and looking—as it was plain to be seen she was—an angel among earthy and earthly creatures. Then she began to speak, to declaim in the language of her own celestial country—waving her wand—then the back opened. Then cascades of molten silver began to flow, and gigantic ferns to open, and glorified women to ascend slowly, and light to be turned on in streams and floods, and I to be generally dazzled, bewildered, and suffering from a sense of exquisite oppression! Then, pillars began to be revealed, pillars that revolved and glistened, and more ferns to open, and angels to ascend in

pairs; and then in the centre rose a fountain, which seemed to stream a rain of gold, and then with delighted applause bursting out on all sides, the waters of the fountain parted, and then in the centre was discovered *she* who I thought was lost to me for ever, more ambrosial, more celestial, more roseate, than before, there enthroned as queen, silver wand in hand, with all bending to her. I felt a thrill of joy, and yet I had a dismal presentiment that the end was not far away.

So it proved to be. The minor heavenly beings floated away in ranks to each side, and the celestial creature began to speak, oh, how melodiously! some farewell words. Not without a tinge of mournful sadness her utterances rose and fell. I could have listened for ever to that dying fall. My foreboding was fatally true. With her marvellous power, she was about transforming the miller, Mother Bunch herself, and others, into now and strange shapes—Harlequin, Clown, Pantaloon, and Columbine (Miss Robespierre standing dressed already at the wing). A wave of that wand, and it was done. Miss Robespierre came bounding on (ah! how easy to know that *she* was a mere creature of earth, hired at so much per night); the clown turned in his toes, and leered at us, and asked how we were to-morrow; harlequin glittered like a snake; and what I have since heard called "the comic business" set fairly in. But with this buffoonery the divine fires of transformation faded out. I had one last exquisite glimpse of the lovely fairy Morgana, more bright, more ambrosial than ever, waving her wand, when the two halves of a street came rushing together from the side, exhibiting the establishment of Mr. Beeley, a butcher, and Harmony and Co., music-sellers—met in the centre, and shut her out from me for ever!

Then set in, the old confusion, convulsing all round—houses changed into kitchens, gardens into steam-boats, and vegetable shops into railway trains. The clown and his decrepit friend took lodgings together, and when they sat down found their seats lifting them to the ceiling. Articles of food were purloined from traders' shops, the shopman always coming out into the street to arrange his bargain, and thus leaving his wares an easy prey to the evil-disposed and designing. Customers' heads were cut off, and fastened on again by the adhesive agency of the first glue-pot that chanced to pass by.

Finally, it came to an end, and we went our way. Going home, Honest John talked exuberantly of the whole performance, dwelling specially on the theft by the clown of a lady's crinoline, and his converting of its wires into a sort of meat-safe, and hanging it round with rabbits, cats, and live poultry; "one of the best things he ever saw in the whole course of his life." Mrs. Honest John fancied something else; the Contemporary Boy rather leant to the policeman scenes; but—poor blinded things—they were insensible to *her*. Not one of them mentioned her. "He didn't like it," said Honest

John, pointing to me. "Something was wrong. I saw it. He won't tell us what." My sister whispered softly, "You were sick, dear. I was afraid——" In the darkness of the cab I resented this: it was too much, for she had indeed gently warned me at dinner, when I believe for the third time I had—— But it was not the rich slabs of fried pudding. How little they understood me! I could not explain, and I have an idea that they set me down as sulky.

It was a relief to get to my lonely chamber. There, in solitude, I could call up the enchanting image, and feast upon all her loveliness. I made her rise again in slow time (worked by invisible mechanics) from among the golden groves. I bathed her once more in ambrosial light. I saw again in her angelic lineaments that exquisitely gentle and half-mournful expression. I illumined, too, from within the celestial substance which formed her arms. In short, I dwelt upon her perfections with a miserable pleasure, which every moment made me more and more wretched. I saw her as she appeared for the last time, and felt the curious sensation I have described as "a wrench." It was misery, despair, desolation. I began to toss, and passed a terrible night—the worst since the well-known measles epoch, when people sat up with me. Towards morning I began to dream, and I saw her again bathed in pink light.

I came down to utter blankness, and to—the meal known as breakfast. Everything jarred upon me. It all looked like school. It had the rawness and general prose of that establishment. I wanted to have everything bathed in pink ambrosial light. I was silent and gloomy, and could not eat with the indiscriminate selection, which in my instance was almost matter of notoriety. I became the subject of public remark. It was again insisted I was ill: an insinuation indignantly repudiated. Honest John Plusher then rallied me in his own pleasant way on being "put out" by something: a course of remark which bitterly wounded me. Then my sister, Mrs. Honest John, kindly changed the subject to the spectacle of last night. "It was very good," said Honest John—"uncommonly good! He had seen nothing better, in fact—Scenery so good! 'Jove! what perfection they've brought these things to now-a-days! Now, that scene of the dancing; the what d'ye call it——?"

"The Transformation Scene?" said Mrs. Honest John.

"No, the one where they come in and dance?"

I could not restrain myself, but broke out, "The Glittering Glade of the Fairies and the Valley of the Golden Foliage!"

They started.

"By Jove!" said Honest John, looking at me with astonishment. "But," said he, "it was spoiled by that stout dumpy woman with the wand; the queen, or whatever they called her."

My cheeks were burning. I felt them blazing. She to be thus grossly described! But, good

in the main, Honest John was a coarse creature.

"Eh!" he said to me, "did you see how heavily she moved? It was like an elephant waltzing."

An elephant waltzing! My cheeks like coals! Every eye upon me! I could not stand it, and fled from the room—crying, I believe. They must have thought me going mad. Honest John came to soothe me, but cautiously and with a sort of wonder. It was proposed that for the morning pastime we should visit a palace—the Crystal, or some such thing: "make a day of it," as Honest John said. I agreed. I was indifferent; they might lead where they would; nay, I even assumed a sort of wild and ghastly merriment discordant with my habitual character. It was done to hide the grim despair that was working under my jacket. I saw every minute they knew not what was come over me (how should they?), and John all through the day kept his eye carefully upon me.

We went to the Palace. I saw it; that is, they saw it. The despair and blankness was growing upon me more and more. I refused food. I declined buns and "cream tarts," a delicacy I was known to be partial to. I was pining to be alone again. But as it grew towards evening, and the darkness was closing in, and the street-lamps began to be lighted, the blankness and desolation seemed to come on me as with a rush—for I knew that very soon the ambrosial pink light would be turned on, and the celestial Divine creature would once more descend. The thought made me ache again. We were coming home in a cab. Honest John precipitated our movements with a good-natured apology, for that he was obliged to be back in good time to take Mrs. Honest John to a family dinner at old Backslider's.

The people were hurrying by very fast; gas-light was flaring in the shop windows on their faces as they went by. When suddenly a plot, a wild daring scheme, appalling almost in the stupendously bold character of its proportions, leaped into my head. I would do it, or, in reality, sicken and die. It must end.

In a moment my spirits rose. I astounded them by the sudden change. I laughed boisterously. I saw Honest John glancing at me a little nervously. I became almost exultant, but am ashamed to think into what a little monster of craft I became suddenly transformed. I accounted for the alteration in my demeanour by an admission that the sickness with which I had been charged had altogether passed away, and that I was now restored to comparative health. I pretended to have had nothing heavy on my mind but pudding.

I thought they would never go to that dinner. But at last they did. Then I hurriedly matured my guilty scheme. I took the Contemporary Boy aside and unfolded to him the details. He was first appalled, then stupefied, by the daring of the undertaking. When he recovered himself,

he declined to take part in it; until, in my desperation having recourse to awful threats, he gave way. The scheme was a wicked, nefarious, stolen visit to the scene of last night's celestial joys. I made him a partner in my infamy.

Blinding the vigilance of the servants, we set out. But the night was wet and stormy, and our available capital, putting every strain upon our resources, was barely equal to the price of two pit tickets; a cab was not to be thought of. I wrapped myself up proudly in a stoical indifference (and also in the little shrunken garment known to us as a great-coat), and said I did not care. The Contemporary Boy said he did, and held back reluctantly. I had to use violence to bring the Contemporary Boy on.

We asked the way "to the theatre." Rough men invariably answered us bluntly, "Wot theatre?" I replied gently, the Contemporary Boy trembling at my side, "The theatre where the Pantomime is." He replied in the same rough way, "That warn't much help. Howsomever" (I distinctly remember the use of this odd word), "howsomever, he supposed it were the theayter in Beak-street?" The Contemporary Boy said, boldly, that was it. Then we must take the first turning to the right, then to the left by the public-house, &c.

The rain was now beginning to pour down very steadily, and we took the first turning to the right, &c., then to the left, &c., and then broke down. We had to ask again. Rain increasing. Contemporary Boy beginning to cry, like a beastly baby as he was, at his saturation. But I should have recollected that he had not the Great Purpose within him, which I had, to bear him up. We asked again, but this time people declined to stop to answer our inquiries. We were fast growing pulpy; and now, in addition to the responsibility resting on me, I had the additional burden cast upon me of dragging my companion along.

It was growing serious, but still I held on. After nearly an hour's walking and an hour's drenching, we reached the theatre the rough man had directed us to. And here we broke down altogether. We knew from the outside that it was not the one.

I was still equal to the situation, and was calmly asking "the way to the theatre," in the same general terms (to which it was much more difficult to obtain an answer, as we were now actually *at* a theatre), when the Contemporary Boy, utterly disregarding the decencies of life, broke out with such noise—sobs accompanied with stampings in the open streets—as to attract public attention. I had a weight of care on me at this moment, for there was a tumult of grief in my breast, as of the aim of this fatal expedition being yet so far off; thinking, too, how by this time the peerless queen would have nearly reached the close of her too, too short career. A humane bystander taking interest in my situation and witnessing the insane behaviour of the

Contemporary Boy, charitably entered into the case. He learned from me a short outline of the Celestial Entertainment, with the names and situations. "I know," said the humane bystander—"I know the place. But bless you, my lad! it's miles away from here. If you was to take the best 'Ansom, and the best Oss as was in that 'Ansom, you wouldn't do it afore nine." "But," said I, timorously, and with a blankness of despair coming over me, "we could walk, you know—walk *very fast*." In the confusion of my senses I did not see how this process could convey us faster than cab and horse. But this I did see: that it was all over with me for that night. And so, wet, miserable physically, miserable morally, I announced to the Contemporary Boy that we were going home; and this quieted his dastard soul.

The Retreat was accomplished with wonderful skill, but under circumstances of terrible hardship. It seemed to be all splash, soak, and flounder. We were perpetually stumbling into puddles—a minor trouble—yet I know not if it were not the sorest of all our miseries. After prodigies of generalship we reached our own door. The maid who opened it was all in a fright. We presented a piteous spectacle, as though newly taken out of the water by the grapnels of the Humane Society's men. But I had presence of mind to caution her to strict silence; and we crept up-stairs to bed. The state of the stair-carpeting after our passage was (I was afterwards informed on good authority) a subject of gricf and scandal to the person whose duty it was to look after that department. Hot drinks were suggested; an offer greedily caught at by the Contemporary Boy. I accepted it languidly, on sanitary grounds, for indeed I was growing indifferent to life. This last blow and stroke of ill success had finished me. I looked on myself as separated from the Queen of My Soul for ever, and I buried my head in fine linen and blankets, supremely wretched. I was shivering all down the back, and very hot and dry about the throat.

By-and-by came home Honest John Plusher and his wife. I heard them knock, I heard their voices on the stairs, as in wonder; for it was early, and they expected to see us up. I was quivering and rattling and chattering my teeth, when lights flashed in the room, and Honest John stood over me.

"Halloa!" he cried, in his cheerful way, "what's all this?" (Just as I had feared, the craven Contemporary Boy had betrayed me.) "Come, come, we shall be all right again in the morning; hey, shan't we?" And yet I detected a wounded tone in Honest John's manner, which pained me to the quick. "Why," he said, "couldn't you have told me? Old John would have been game for a second go at the pantomime, if you had asked him. You might have trusted me, my boy, instead of stealing off, and half killing yourself." This was indeed heaping on coals of fire. Deceive Honest John on mere

common grounds? no, not for worlds, not for all the cakes, apples, theatres, and pocket eight-bladed knives (with ingenious appliance for removing a stone out of a horse's shoe) in the world! But here I was, racked with a gnawing passion for a Celestial Being of ambrosial make, a passion which was consuming me as with slow fire. Surely there was some excuse. John went on, in the same mournfully injured way, heaping on the coals of fire as with a shovel. "If you had told me, my boy, we could have fixed for to-morrow night, taken a cab, and done the thing decently. I thought you and I knew one another better than that. I don't care much for the sort of thing myself, except just once and away; but if you had told me, or—" I could bear it no longer. "O John! John!" I said, "I am a wretched, miserable, broken-hearted boy;" and, drawing down his head to me, with much confusion, and I believe with tears, told him my state of mind.

Why had I not confided in him? Why? In all my life I never experienced such nobility, such true nobleness, responsive to my confidence. He entered into it like a thorough gentleman; understood it perfectly, sympathised pitifully. He comforted and compassionated me. He soothed my poor wrung heart. Nay, more—wonderful to relate—he promised to assist me to the utmost of his power. A thrill passed over me, in addition to the physical agonish thrill. I could not believe my senses. "Yes, yes," said Honest John, with mystery. "You must go to sleep now. But I have thought of a scheme; we will plan it all together in the morning. Hush! not a word more to-night. Rely on me. Mrs. Mountjack is the very woman."

Mrs. Mountjack the very woman! Why? How singular! What could it mean? But Cousin John was a man of deep purpose, and when he spoke, spoke what he meant to do. I allowed the image of the divine and radiant Being to rise before me clothed in light, held with her a short and rapturous conversation, and dropped away into sweeter dreams.

How mysterious are the workings of fate! In the morning I rose fresh and perfectly restored to health, while the craven Contemporary Boy was, according to the strange metaphor, as hoarse as a drum. His eyes were swollen frightfully in his head. I could not but interpret this as just retribution for his abject behaviour of the previous night.

Honest John and I had a private interview in the parlour before breakfast. I again told him candidly my views, which were of the most honourable tenor. I seemed to myself of a sudden to have grown a man. I spoke calmly and composedly. I would go through with it, I said. But to come to details. What of this Mrs. Mountjack, the person to whom allusion had been made the night before?

Then Honest John unfolded. His statement was full and satisfactory, and left nothing

to be desired. The plan was delightfully clear and simple. Mrs. Mountjack was a milliner, who did work, "bodies," &c., in an economical way for Mrs. Honest John. There was nothing very important in that, and my face fell. But Mrs. Mountjack had a sister (there was scarcely much more in that), and this sister was engaged as costumière at the theatre. Ah! there was much in that, and my face rose. Cousin John was indeed honest!—a brave deliverer—a noble creature! When was it to be? That very day if I liked.

We saw Mrs. Mountjack. She was not very busy. She could spare us an hour. She could come now—to be sure. Margaret Mountjack was down at the theatre. We took a cab, the three of us.

My heart beat tremendously. Those were terrible moments of commingled joy and anxiety. I was all in a tremble and a flutter, for I was now, in all human probability, to see my princess. She was to be there—was sure to be there—temporarily on a visit from diviner regions—was Mrs. Ricks. Who was she? Mrs. Ricks was the fairy queen. What! not known by some female spiritual name, common to the angelic choirs? No! Simply Mrs. Ricks, wife of Ricks. What! married? And why not? And yet, somehow, it seemed to me ludicrous and absurd and dismal. Ricks was a pantaloon at one of the minor theatres over the bridge. It surely should not have been so ordained.

At a dingy lane we were set down, and entered at a dingy door in the dingy lane. The sense of awe and general flutter I experienced at this moment, is beyond description. How would she appear? Glorified, and in her habitual medium of ambrosial pink light; or in a sort of celestial undress? I trembled, for these were awful questions.

We went through many dark passages, Mrs. Mountjack leading. The flavour of these places was unpleasant, verging on the charnel-house flavour. But what of that! We went up little short flights of steps of three or four stairs each; we went round sharp corners, got glimpses into what seemed a huge cellar lighted from chinks in the wall, and finally arrived at a rather cheerful room where there was a fire, and where, too, there were several women busy "cutting out" and sewing gaudy materials, and where the air seemed charged with remnants. The leading cutter-out was a Mountjack. With her, the other Mountjack—*our* Mountjack—communed a few moments mysteriously. They looked over at me. She then went out—the other Mountjack—and we were invited to admire the articles of apparel in hand. A stream of decayed persons in ill health evidently from the tone of their cheeks, and as evidently not privileged to live in the rich and fattening ambrosial air of the theatre, came in and out. A sallow man, with white-lead cheeks, a tightly-buttoned coat, and a walking-stick

sticking out of his under-coat pocket; a fat man, but of the same tinge; a tall lean man; a short stout man, all more or less funny in their remarks, but all with the same curious marks of relationship about them; women, too, sickly unwholesome creatures, dressed rather like decayed housemaids, one with a large umbrella, another in an old striped shawl, with a basket on her arm, and leading a very cold child with a bit of boa round its neck for a comforter. She was as yellow as a guinea, and looked as if she had lately been ill.

"Mind ye have the new 'body' for me to-night," she said. "Mr. Perkeboys says so. Bless ye, what a hurry I'm in! Good-by, Mrs. Mountjack."

"Wait, do," said our Mountjack. "She's gone to look for you."

"I can't stay," said the woman; and dragged away the cold child with her.

We waited a few seconds more, and admired some spangles to fill up the time. (How different they, from the *real* molten gold, all in a state of liquefaction, that streamed out in all directions at night!) Then came back the other Mountjack in great haste.

"I can't find her nowheres—I can't find Mrs. Ricks."

"Bless you, she was here," says her sister. "Come and gone!"

"Oh, was she! Then that's all right. You saw her, then?"

"Who?" says Honest John. "Why, was that her?"

"Her with the child. Yes," says both the Mountjacks.

"Bless my soul," cries Honest John Plusher, "what a world it is! So that was the Fairy Queen!"

I could not believe it. I refused to believe it. I laughed scornfully.

But I came to believe it afterwards, and I have believed it ever since, and I believe it now. It was a cruel crushing blow. O Harlequin Fairy Morgana, I have found a greater changer than you, many and many a time since that day!

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.
CHAPTER XLVI. LILY'S NEW LIFE.

A BREATH of her old life had blown on the faded cheek of the horse-riding countess. The boon companions of bygone times, the opportunity for being luxurious, and haughty, and insolent, had returned once more. She painted and decked herself with a will; for she knew how select was her audience, and how sure she was of their plaudits. To think that she—who had been the leader of that kind of fashion which fashionable young men are ashamed to own, yet follow, and bow down before with servile reverence—should have been but an hour ago doomed to caper on a circus-horse for the amusement of an amphitheatre full of plebeians, admitted for sixpence in addition to the ordinary price of entrance to the gardens! To think that not so very long since, her worldly estate should have been even more debased, and that, ruddled and tattooed, and with feathers on her head, she should have been shown, as a mock savage, for a few liards, on the boards of a French booth!

So the countess is gone to her supper, and the horses are safe in their stables. The last Roman candle has smouldered out, and very ghastly and gallows-like in the moonlight looks the iron framework of the fireworks. A faint odour of burning yet lingers about them, and the night breeze stirs shreds of cartridge-paper, half consumed to cinder, which have fallen in the thickets of Ranelagh. You might fancy that this was some huge Place de Grève, where criminals had been broken on the Catherine-wheel, or hanged upon gibbets, and their bodies afterwards given up to the flames. But it was only the corpse of Pleasure that had thus been burnt to ashes.

The countess is gone to her supper, the peep-shows and fiddling-tents are shut up, and Ranelagh is left to darkness, to the night watchman; and to Lily Floris.

Lily did not live in the gardens, but she and her—well, her guardian, her protectress, her mistress, her tyrant, were generally the last to leave the place. The countess was generally so much exhausted by her exertions in the high school of horsemanship as to require a long

period of rest in her dressing-room before she went home. Stimulants—stimulants stronger than eau-de-Cologne—had to be administered before she felt strong enough to retire to her domicile. The countess was liberal—not to say lavish—in her use of stimulants. As she had attained middle age, as her husband was dead, and she had no particular character to speak of, it may not be indiscreet to avow, once for all, that she was in the habit of taking a great deal too much brandy-and-water. She said it did her good. The doctor said it did her harm; but, at any rate, she took it: cold. It did not improve her temper. Far from angelic at the best of times, it now bordered very closely on the fiendish. Her powers of tongue were by no means diminished; yet she seemed to distrust them, and her abusive eloquence was, by no means rarely, backed up by blows. She was frequently provoked into striking those who offended her; and who could avoid giving offence to that terrible countess? I have heard that the children of the man who makes birch-brooms have usually a bad time of it; and there is considerable risk in residing with a lady of violent temper addicted to drinking, of equestrian pursuits, and part of whose necessary equipment is a riding-whip.

Lily often thought of that dreadful night in Paris, when the Italian met her in the Elysian Fields. Was it a judgment on her for running away, she wondered, that her temporary evasion had been followed by so dire a bondage? Perhaps. Her terror had been so excessive, her despair so great, that it was only in a dim and fragmentary manner that she could recall the incidents of her capture. She had fainted somewhere, that she knew. On returning to consciousness, she had found herself in a filthy little room, stretched on a filthier mattress laid upon the floor. The Italian was crouched on a stool by the fireplace, smoking, and a toothless ragged old woman was pottering over some evil-smelling mess in a pipkin on the hearth. The room was seemingly Signor Ventimillioni's studio; for, strewn about, were numbers of unfinished wax torsos, some with wigs and some without, some horrid in hirsute adornments in the way of whiskers and moustaches, and some bare and grinning like corpses. Arms, legs, hands and feet, appertaining to celebrated characters in ancient and modern history, littered a row of shelves and a rough deal table,

together with certain pots full of colour, and bits of lace and tinsel. A faint odour of warm wax, even more sickening than that of the stew in the old woman's pikein pervaded the hovel.

There came from an inner room a woman with her hair hanging over her shoulders—a half-washed face, for fantastic streaks of paint were still visible on her cheeks and forehead, and an old petticoat and shawl hastily thrown over a theatrical tunic and fleshings. Her spangled sandals were plainly visible beneath her dress. She held in one hand a flaring tallow candle, and in the other a glass of some liquor.

She knelt down by the side of the still half-fainting girl, and held the glass to her lips.

"Drink!" she said, in English, "drink! this instant. It will do you good. Drink! or I'll strangle you."

Lily could not but obey. The strangely accoutred woman looked so fierce, and spoke so sternly. She swallowed a mouthful of the liquid, which was nauseous to her palate and scorching to her throat, and was, indeed, brandy mingled with water. After a short time she felt better, though dizzy.

"And so I have found you at last, little runaway," the woman went on. "I could have sworn it was you in the booth. I knew those hypocritical little eyes of yours at once. Ah! I have had a fine chase after you, cunning little fox as you are. Where have you been all these years, you crocodile? Come, confess. Let me know all about it. Speak, or I'll beat you."

Nervous and shattered as she was, Lily could at first give scarcely a coherent reply to the questions with which the strange woman well-nigh overwhelmed her. Though she had a vague and alarmed dread of whom she might be, she was not prepared at first to admit her right to interrogate her. In fact, she could only tremble and palpitate like a little bird fresh caught in the hand of a strong cruel boy.

The woman made her drink more of the liquid. Lily pleaded that it nearly choked her, and burnt her, but she would take no denial. Although it seemed to set her brain on fire, she really felt stronger for it, and, after a time, could talk. The woman led her on, not unadroitly, by asking her if she remembered Miss Bunycastle's school at Stockwell, the dinner at Greenwich, the steam-boat, the journey to Paris, the Pension Marcassin. Yes: Lily remembered all these. What next? the woman asked threateningly. Well, she told all she knew of her residence with Madame de Kergolay: all save her love for Edgar Greyfaunt.

Why had she left the roof of the lady who had been so kind to her? Lily experienced much difficulty in explaining that part of the matter. She could not lie; and yet she dared not avow the hard and bitter truth. The woman would not believe that she had found herself in the Champs Elysées by accident. She had run away, she said: of that she was certain. Lily, blushing and sobbing, was constrained to admit her flight. Why had she fled? The woman asked her

again and again, in tones which each time became more menacing. She raised her clenched hand at last, and might have brought it down heavily (for she had been partaking freely of the stimulant which she had forced Lily to sip); but the Italian muttered something from his stool, and she desisted. The girl sought to pacify her. She tried to explain. She confessed that she had been ungrateful to her benefactress, that she had lost her affection, and that she saw nothing before her but sudden flight.

"Ungrateful! I can well believe that. To whom hast thou not been ungrateful, little spawn of evil? From youth upwards it has always been the same story—ingratitude, ingratitude!"

Surely she, the Wild Woman, had done a great deal in her time to earn the poor child's gratitude!

"There is some man at the bottom of this," she said at last, rising as if wearied with further cross-questioning. "Thou art just the age to make a fool of thyself for a dandy face and a pair of blonde whiskers. Never mind, little one; we will wait. Sooner or later, by fair means or by foul, we will have thy secret out of thee."

She let her be at last, and the girl sank into a long deep slumber. Waking towards morning, Lily turned on her sorry pallet, and, half hoping that she might never wake again, once more sank into sleep. Excitement, fatigue, and the liquor they had made her swallow, had been more than opiates to her.

She was kept close prisoner in the hovel the whole of that day and the whole of the next. The fêtes still continued, and her tyrant was called upon to enact, during at least sixteen hours out of the twenty-four, the part she was so admirably qualified to fill: that of the Wild Woman. Lily used to look upon her in the morning with a curiosity that was mingled with horror as she arrayed herself for the mountebankery of the day. It was a monstrous toilette. How soiled and faded the fleshings were! How frayed at the wrists and armpits! How they bulged into ugly creases at the knees and elbows! How splayfooted the sandals looked, how coarse and garish the embroidery! She had no time to pink her fleshings, but rubbed powdered vermilion into the parts that were discoloured, just as she rubbed it into her face. There were patches of the latter, however, that required orpiment, and cerese, and bismuth, and ochre, and chrome yellow to be laid on in grotesque streaks, and half-moons, and dabs. Was she not a Wild Woman of the Prairies? Before she daubed on her war-paint she would anoint her face and hands with a tallow candle.

"No cold cream for me now, little angel," she would say, with a horrible leer, to the wondering girl. "Watch well what I am doing. It will soon be thy turn to assist me to dress, and woe betide thee if thou makest blunders. Observe, the candle first; the tallow, c'est du suif, de chez Pépicière, tout de bon. And I, who have covered myself with pearl powder—de vraies perles d'Orient—who have basked in cau-

de-Cologne and milk of almonds, and who have found, when I have done dressing, the bouquet left for me at the door of my lodge by the duke or the ambassador—ay, the bouquet with a diamond ring for a holder. 'Cré non! c'est à crever de rage!'

Then she would drink a little brandy, and a little more, and more, and console herself, and begin to sing.

When she was fully accoutred in all her paint, and all her feathers, and spangles, and tawdry, twopenny splendours, she would, after surveying herself in a broken piece of looking-glass, come forward to Lily and pose and grimace before her with the great wooden club and foil paper-covered hatchet that went to make up her paraphernalia.

"Am I handsome, à cette heure? Am I graceful? Am I fascinating? Am I La Bella Zigazcsi, who has turned so many hearts?" she would cry, ironically.

Lily did not know what answer to return.

"You say nothing. You despise your mademoiselle. Ah! you disdain me, do you, Mademoiselle la Comtesse—Baronne—Princesse de Korgolay—Mademoiselle la Marquise de Carabas—Quatre sous? We will soon take your pride out of you. Quick, trollop. Donne-moi la goutte. Give me some brandy, do you hear?"

Lily poured out for her, into a glass that was without a foot, some of the poison the woman liked so well.

"Ah! that is good," she would say, drawing a long breath. "Ça tue à la longue, mais ça donne du courage—du zug-zug." And then she would throw back her long hair, now coarse and rosy from inculture, and flecked with grey. "A short life and a merry one. Vive la joie et le zug-zug! Dire que j'ai été une miladi—la femme d'un gentilhomme. C'était de la crapule, ce blaut. Un franc coquin que j'ai eu pour mari. Yes, he was a scoundrel, but he was a gentleman, and I was his wife. I used to ride in a carriage and go to the opera with ostrich feathers in my head. I used to wear diamonds. Look at my hands now, you wolf cub."

Rude work had spread the muscles, swollen the knuckles, roughened the skin, and covered the backs with gnarled knots, like unto the roots of trees. They had once been handsome hands; but they were discoloured now, and chapped and barked by exposure. In bitter mockery of her former state, she still had her fingers covered with rings; but they were paltry baubles, not worth ten sous apiece—mere bits of glass backed with tinsel and set in hoops of brass, which left green stains upon her flesh.

She would come home at night, tired, dusty, perspiring, the ruddle on her face muddled into one cloudy morass, and more than half intoxicated. The Italian waxwork man would come with her, and he who wore the suit of armour. There was another Italian too, a hideous hunch-backed fellow with a heavy fringe of black whisker beneath his chin, and a huge fur cap and velvet jacket, who dealt in white mice,

marmots, hurdy-burdies, and Savoyard boys. He went by the name of 'L'organo di Barbara,' and no other. He brought one of his slaves with him the second day, a woe-begone little object from Chambéry, aged about eleven, very wan-faced and ragged, who had a consumptive cough, and crouched down in a corner, cuddling a diminutive monkey, who was, as to his upper parts, attired after the fashion of a marquis of the ancient régime, and, as to his lower, after that of the Sultana Scheherazade, as seen in illustrations of the Arabian Nights. And of this monkey the woe-begone little boy from Chambéry seemed passionately fond.

While the men and the Wild Woman were wrangling over their brandy and tobacco and dominoes, Lily ventured to approach the little monkey boy, and slip into his hand a piece of bread, the remnant of her coarse repast.

The Wild Woman saw the action. "Young robber," she cried out. "Attends, je vais te donner une triplée. Ah! I have the double six." But beyond this she took no notice of Lily's patronage of the Savoyard.

The girl was very glad. She made the boy eat, and was delighted that he first of all took care of the monkey, whom he addressed as Cupidon, and whose white teeth were soon chattering over a crisp bit of crust. Lily, growing bolder, stroked the long lean paw of the ape, and even mustered up enough courage to scratch his bullet head. He resented this liberty somewhat, and might have bitten the girl, but for a warning tug at his chain on the part of his master. Then he retired into private life, and the bosom of the Savoyard's friendly but uncleanly shirt, there to dwell in pensive dreams, perhaps, of his primitive forests, and the happy days when he hung on to the limbs of trees by his prehensile tail, watching his great uncle as he hurled cocoa-nuts at the head of the intrusive traveller. Still absorbed as he was in the pleasures of warmth and rest from labour, Lily could see his little bright eyes twinklingly watching her from under the waistcoat of the Alpine boy.

"Where do you dance?" asked the Savoyard.

"Dance?" quoth Lily, opening her eyes.

"Haven't I seen you with a tambourine and red shoes, doing the Infiorata?"

Lily told him, gently, that it must be some other girl.

"How much did your padrona give for you? My padrone paid six hundred francs for Vittore Emmanuele" (the names of all Savoyards are either Victor Emmanuel, Charles Albert, or Charles John). "My father bought two cows and six goats with my price, and paid off Grippe Minaud the bloodsucker, who had lent him money to raise his crop. Does your padrona beat you? My master beats us with a chain. Luigi, the boy from Genoa, who died, tried to poison 'L'organo' in his petit verre. When they washed him for burial his body was all blue."

They were a curious trio, the girl, the Savoyard, and the ape.

On the morning of the third day the Wild Woman came to Lily's bedside, and said, "March!" The girl had nothing to pack up, and still wore the modest little bonnet and shawl she had had on when she ran away from Madame de Kergolty. The Wild Woman had discovered her locker, and, not without tears and entreaties on Lily's part, had wrenched it away from her. She had nothing now that belonged to her in the world, and was Quite Alone.

The Wild Woman's travelling dress was a faded tartan gown, and a more faded scarlet shawl, with a bonnet inconceivably battered. She did not fail to remark, however, as she bade Lily survey her, that she had been in the habit of wearing velvets and cashmeres, and a bird of paradise plume in her bonnet. And then she cursed, and took a little more cognac.

The Italian waxwork man, who was either the Wild Woman's husband, or some relative, near, but decidedly not dear to her, was to be of the party. He was not so very ill-conditioned a fellow, and was passing kind to Lily, never failing to remonstrate, and, if need were, to interfere if the woman offered to strike her. The Wild Woman's temper, especially towards evening, when she had partaken most copiously of cognac, was very uncertain; and there was no knowing when the blows might begin to fall.

They went by means of a waggon, laden with the waxwork and the scenery and appointments of the Wild Woman (for the shows were a joint concern, and Ventimillioni appeared to be proprietor of them both), to a place called Pontoise. Thence to Orleans, and thence even so far as Dijon. They halted by night at mean inns, where sometimes they obtained a couple of bedrooms cheaply, and sometimes Ventimillioni and the countess—that is to say, the Wild Woman—camped out in a barn. The toothless old woman had been left in charge of the hotel on the quay in Paris, but Lily had always, however small and miserable it might be, a room to herself. The Wild Woman never failed, likewise, in the precaution of taking away Lily's clothes, and the candle, and locking the door after her, when she retired for the night.

The girl fell into a state of semi-lassitude and apathy. She did not seem to care much what became of her. She had lost her purview. Her horizon was bounded on all sides by the Wild Woman and the Italian, and beyond them she could discern nothing. She was not specially desirous to die; but she was not particularly anxious about living. She was not even actively unhappy. She was quite submissive and resigned: only numbed, and chilled, and torpid.

There were fairs on the road; and at some of these the Wild Woman gave her performance, and Signor Ventimillioni exhibited his waxwork. On these occasions Lily was always carefully locked in her room, and got neither dinner nor supper till the pair returned at night, the woman not very sober, now grumbling, now

chuckling over the receipts of the day and evening.

It was at a place called St. Esprit, and when Lily had been locked up many hours on a hot August afternoon, and felt very lonely—just that kind of loneliness when you begin to hear strange noises that have no foundation save in your imagination—that a big country girl, who was waitress and chambermaid at the miserable auberge the party had put up at, came into the room. "I have got another key, little one," she said, triumphantly.

The country girl had very red elbows and a face like a tomato, little pig's eyes, and matted hair whose roots were within an inch and a half of her eyebrows. She breathed hard when she spoke, and, seemingly, was not unaccustomed to the use of garlic as a condiment with her meals.

"I have a key, little one," she continued, "and something else, too. Attrape." And from beneath her apron she produced a mighty slice of bread covered with black berry jam.

Lily was really hungry, and only too glad to get the bread and jam. She had well-nigh devoured it, when the girl whose face was like a tomato said:

"Why don't you run away? I would, if I were you. I know those wretches treat you cruelly. I have heard them abusing you at night, after I have gone to bed. Tenez, ma petite. I have got fifteen francs saved up to buy me a golden cross, but my bien-aimé will give me another, I am sure, even if he is obliged to sell himself as a substitute in the conscription to do so. Take my fifteen francs, and run away from these bad people."

Run away! She had tried that once before; but whither was Lily to run, now?

Lily heard the good-natured country girl out, and thanked her for her bread and jam, but she bade her take back the key, lest she should get herself into trouble, and told her that she had no thoughts of running away. No one meant to treat her unkindly, she said, and, if she was unhappy, it was her own fault. She was, in truth, too weary to fly. She did not care much what became of her. The first hour of captivity is very awful; you rage and scream, and feel as though you could hang yourself to your dungeon bars, or dash your brains out against the walls; but days, weeks, months, years pass, and at last you bear your drudgery with a dull apathy that is well-nigh utter indifference. It does not so much matter. A year the more or a year the less does not count. And at last, when haply the cell door is opened, and you are told that you are free, you are in no very great hurry to move. You have remained here so long, why should you not stay here a little longer? Prisoners have been known to memorialise their jailer to be allowed to stop, when their discharge has arrived, and at last they have had to be turned out of the prison by force. There are times when you might leave Gonfaloniere's door in the casemates of Spielberg open, and tell him that the sentinel is bought, and that he

has two hours to get away—when Silvio Pellico might find the bars of his cell window under the piombi sawn through, and a rope-ladder nailed to the sill; and yet when the captives would but yawn, and think it scarcely worth their while to make their escape. There is somewhat of the infinite mercy of Heaven in thus blunting our senses during suffering. The victim sleeps at the stake. I have heard of a convict who committed suicide because the end of his slavery was rapidly approaching; but I think you might trust a hundred convicts with razors to shave themselves every day for a year without three of them cutting their throats.

Lily was not in chains, and her window was not barred; but she was a captive, nevertheless. She had resigned herself to it, and waited, submissively enough, for what was to come next.

The hostess of the tavern where they lived at Dijon brought her her meals after this. Perhaps she suspected the good nature of her servant girl. The Wild Woman had told her that Lily was a refractory apprentice, obstinately intent on not learning to dance on the tight-rope, and inveterately addicted to running away. The hostess, who had had much to do with mountebanks in her time (her husband had been a *paillasse*, and her eldest son was a ventriloquist, while her youngest daughter walked on stilts), fully believed this story, and looked upon Lily as a very atrocious young criminal indeed.

"If you were apprenticed to me," she would say, "my faith, I would arrange you. You should learn to dance as the bears do. *Va petite drôlesse, je te ferais sauter à la musique d'un bon martinet.* I'd lay a strap about you, that's all."

Lily did not think it worth while to bandy words with this woman, who was stupid and violent, and given to imbibing too much cassis.

"Sulky young baboon," the hostess would continue, shaking her forefinger at her. "At thy age, too. Almost a woman. And not so very bad-looking, either," she added, in an under tone, to herself. "Dost thou know what will come to thee for running away? The police will get hold of thee, and thou wilt be sent to prison, *absolument comme une courcuse.* Is it so very difficult, then, to dance on the cord? Bah! when I was half thy age, my father made me swallow a Turkish scimitar, and the sabre of a cuirassier; and before I was twelve, I was practising the back summersault on a spring board into a pond of water, to prevent breaking my bones when I fell."

A fortnight elapsed before the Wild Woman came back; but she returned radiant. They had been to Lyons: to the fair of the *Croix Rouge*. *Ventimillioni* had run over to Geneva, where, in those days, and may be, for aught I know, to this day, there is a public gaming-table. Luck was in his favour, and the Italian had won heavily: two hundred Napoleons. He had come back to Lyons, dressed up the Wild Woman in satin and velvet, bought her a

bonnet with a bird of paradise plume in it, covered her wrist and neck with cheap jewellery, and taken her over to Geneva. Luck had gone against him then; and with a very few Napoleons remaining from his winnings, he was prepared moodily to return to the place whence he came, and take to the waxwork business again. But the Wild Woman—Madame la Comtesse, in future, if you please—had been experiencing the smiles of fortune, while on the unhappy *Ventimillioni* she had so suddenly scowled. Madame had not ventured anything beyond a few five-franc pieces on the red or the black; but she had met an old, a very old acquaintance at Geneva. Whence it arose that she returned to Dijon radiant.

"Up, *parcasseuse!*" she cried to Lily. "Up, and get your rags together. We are going back to England and to life."

The girl, who passed most of her time now crouching listlessly in a corner, interpreted this command as a literal one, and stood up in obedience to it. Madame seemed to recollect that the rags she had spoken of were already gotten together, and that Lily had no others.

"Did ever one see such a tatterdemalion?" she grumbled. "I must go to a *revendeuse à la toilette*, and get her some clothes to travel in."

Lily was locked up, for the last time; but within an hour madame came back with a fat old woman who had a lisp and the asthma, and whose splay, slowly crawling feet, in their roomy black list slippers, looked like a pair of turtle in mourning for their brethren who had been made by cruel epicures into soup. The fat old woman carried a big bundle beneath each arm, and Lily was speedily equipped in some faded but decent second-hand garments. The countess sat by, inspecting the proceedings, and tapping the floor impatiently with her parasol. It was the second time, Lily remembered, that she had so been fitted out under inspection. The last time it was by Cutwig and Co.

Ten days afterwards they were in London. The Italian stayed behind. He seemed to bear separation from the Wild Woman—the countess, I mean—with great equanimity. She had for him, and had had always, the haughty and insolent indifference we feel for a person whose grade is beneath ours, but who is useful to us. Even in her lowest state she had treated the waxwork man *du haut en bas*.

"When I pay you a visit in London, my empress, the Italian remarked, showing his white teeth, "you will have some macaroni for your Angelo, your Angelino, your Angeliotto—is it not so?"

"That depends," she answered, tossing her head. "Can you let me have any more money?"

"Not a *bapecco!* you would devour as many millions as there are in my name. I have but four Louis d'or left, and I must have crowded houses at the show for a fortnight, or I shall starve."

"That is your affair."

"Yes, my duchess, that is my affair"—and the

Italian showed his teeth again—"what a pity I did not put you on a pair of pasteboard wings, and show you as an angel instead of a Wild Woman. Well, I am not angry with you. *Donna è mobile*. When you are tired of England, and have lost your engagement through too many potations (you are too fond of cognac, my Zenobia), you will be glad enough to come back to your Angelo, and grate the cheese for his macaroni."

"I hope not."

"Yes you will. Till then, farewell. Take care of the Poverina"—this was Lily, and he patted her, not unkindly, on the shoulder—"and keep your hands off her. England is a good country, though the sun never shines there, and there are laws to protect the weak. Here, *La Giustizia* never interferes with you, unless your passport is out of order."

"I shall do what I like with my own."

"Precisely. Don't ill-treat your cat, or your dog, or whatever else is your own, then. Go, and be happy. Don't tear your new padrone's eyes out, if you can help it. What is his name? Il Signor Touticello—what is it? Dio mio! what a barbarous language it is!"

"His name is no business of yours. Tu m'embêtes, Ventimilioni. Que cela finisse!"

And so parted. The Italian may have been a roving vagabond, not over-scrupulous as to morality; but he was a good-natured kind of fellow, and, when he showed his white teeth, looked quite amiable.

This is how Lily came back to England, and became acquainted with Ranelagh. She had become the attendant, the dresser, the drudge, the slave—call it what you will—of Madame Ernestine, the lady who was creating so great a sensation in the high school of horsemanship.

CAN YOU SWIM?

No. Why not? You never learned.

But dogs and cats have no need of learning. Throw a young dog into the river, for the first time in his life, and he will swim out again at once, as a matter of course. Throw a young gentleman into the same river, under similar circumstances, and the chances are, ten to one, that he will struggle, get choked with water, and drown. Should he, by good luck, not choke or drown, he will probably remain stationary, or be simply borne along by the current, making little or no progress towards the river's bank.

Certain philosophers have adduced these facts as proofs of man's feeble instinctiveness, and of his physical inferiority to the brutes. But they are no such thing; they are quite the contrary. They simply arise from his being a biped and not a quadruped, and from his having a large and heavy brain. His head is heavier, in proportion to his bulk, than that of any other animal. They are, therefore, a proof of his superiority. Moreover, a dog's first essay at swimming is merely the act of walking in water; afterwards,

the experienced water-dog does really swim, with his fore paws at least. A man walking in the water, would not advance, although he might thereby keep his head above the surface, as is practised by swimmers in the action called "treading water."

Nor are all the lower land animals equally gifted with swimming powers. Some are eminently so endowed. The common snake derives its specific name, *Coluber natix*, from the ease with which it plays the eel; swimming, however, with its head well erect in the air. Others, whom you would hardly expect to do so, manage to get themselves out of difficulties. I have seen a hen swim bravely out of a pond into which she had fallen. The long-legged heron swims. Woodcocks, during their migrations, are said sometimes to rest on the surface of the sea. The water-ouzel (whose sub-aquatic habits nobody would suspect from merely seeing the bird) even flies under water, using its wings to aid its progress. It dives, because it is determined to dive: not because it is made for diving.

Others, again, are very bad swimmers indeed. Some pigs cut their own throats while swimming. A hedgehog in the water is a pitiable sight. As he floats, his snout falls below the surface, and it is only by repeated efforts that he raises it for a moment to breathe. Swim as well as he may, he soon drowns, unless the shore be near. There are ducks and upland geese which, although web-footed, rarely or never condescend to swim. It might be a little too hard on them to say they can't. They are pointed out by Darwinites as instances of a hereditary feature (webbed feet) surviving modified habits.

Let us now see what swimming is. To float, is to be sustained on the surface of a fluid by the force of specific gravity. A solid object, dropped into a liquid, displaces a quantity of that liquid exactly equal to its own weight—no more. If the size of the object be greater than the size of an equal weight of the liquid, it is clear that it cannot entirely enter into that liquid—it cannot sink, that is; it floats on the surface. The object is lighter than the liquid; its specific gravity is less. Thus, lead floats on mercury, iron on melted lead, the majority of woods on water, and cork on spirits of wine. To float is scarcely an action; inanimate objects float. A buoy floats. A corpse floats.

To swim, is to move at will on or in a fluid. Swimming is aided by, but is not entirely dependent on, specific gravity. Many fishes which have no bladders are heavier than the water they swim in. They may almost be said to fly in water. To swim, therefore, is the action and effort of an animated organism. A dead duck floats; a live duck swims.

And yet you (who are not only alive, but also, I hope, well) cannot float until you have learned to swim. Floating is one of the most practically useful details of the art of swimming. You would float, when you fall into water, if you could only imitate the inaction and im-

siveness of a dead body. But you cannot; your fears prevent you. You are alive, not dead. Impressionable by alarm, distractable by despair, you struggle, and, filling your lungs with water, become altogether heavier than water. Consequently you sink. The art of swimming teaches you that there is no need to feel either alarm or despair. The swimmer, obeying the laws of specific gravity, and keeping his lungs clear of water, floats motionless for any reasonable length of time. The duration will depend on the temperature of the water in which he is floating.

Now, the human body, as a whole, is so nearly of the same specific gravity as river water, that when the lungs are in their natural state, that is, occupied by air, it floats in that medium; when filled with water, it sinks. The different capacities of chest in different individuals, and their different degrees of fatness, will cause their line of floatation, their mark of tonnage, to differ slightly. I have read of a Neapolitan ecclesiastic so fat, that he used to swim about the Bay without being able to bathe his person higher than the waist, in spite of all his efforts to sink deeper. Grease *would* float, whatever pains he might take to submerge it. Still, the rule holds good as a generality.

With the equilibrium, therefore, so nicely balanced, every inspiration which a person fallen into the water attempts to make while his mouth is under water, diminishes the possibility of his floating, by causing him to inhale water instead of air. Three such inspirations generally suffice to bring about the final catastrophe.

I once saw a wealthy and highly respected tradesman drowned in the presence of his wife and children, who came out to meet him on his arrival home. The old-fashioned river steamer on which he was travelling, stopped to land him at his country villa. The boat was crowded. A company of provincial actors were amusing themselves on deck with a game at cards. The steamer's only bulwark was a rope, which broke somehow as he leaned against it to pass a group of passengers. He fell into deep water, at scarcely a couple of yards' distance from his own garden steps. While people were shouting "He can swim!" "No, he can't!" "Throw a rope!" "Bring the boat round!" and other incoherent cries, everybody giving orders, and nobody doing anything, the unfortunate man beat the water in despair, raised his arms above his head (the sure way to sink, and one mode employed by swimmers when they want to sink), did sink, rose thrice to the surface, and then sunk to rise no more alive. Had he learned to swim, his family might have been spared that sad spectacle. Had his wife learned to swim, she might have saved her husband's life.

A woman has quite as much need of knowing how to swim as a man—nay more. She is more constantly with young children, and therefore more likely to be near, in case of accident happening to them. In case of accident happening to herself, the life of a mother of a family is of

inappreciable value! Learning to swim is surely an easy premium to pay for assurance from one terrible form of death. And what has a lady to do, what terrible sacrifice has she to make, to accomplish the feat of learning to swim? She has simply to frequent a swimming bath for a few weeks in summer; to bathe in trousers instead of the usual dress, and to pay a few shillings to a swimming mistress—or carefully study and carry out the remainder of the present paper. I myself learned to swim in the way here recommended.

Swimming would be much better for pale-faced girls (whose chests are all right) than the cold bath, with repeated dippings, which is commonly prescribed instead. Bathing, generally, is injurious to all when digestion is not thoroughly completed, during profuse and even free perspiration, as well as at certain times and seasons, and in the great heats of a summer's day. Persons disposed to spitting of blood, apoplexy, and deafness, or who are seized with continued shiverings and tightness of the chest after leaving the water, will be wise to abstain from bathing and swimming.

Suppose a swimmer deposited in the water, in the usual well-known swimming position. To advance, he usually first gives the stroke with the arms, as if they were a couple of oars, and then the stroke by striking with the legs. It is the latter which causes him the most to progress; the former is comparatively ineffectual. It affords, however, a space of breathing-time (after the stroke) and of rest for the legs, and also allows the legs to be drawn into position to give the really propulsive stroke. As a proof that it is so, you can swim on your back (when your arms should be folded in complete repose) nearly, if not quite, as fast as in the reverse position.

A frog is the model for human swimmers. He is scarcely a quadruped, either in the water or out of it. True, he does not walk erect; but on land even, he leaps entirely by the muscular spring of his hinder legs; and, in the water, he has two legs and feet which propel him along, and two arms and hands with which he paddles and plays and also effects a landing. This continued exercise of the lower limbs develops them to more than the proportions of an opera dancer's, and causes the thighs to be the morsel sought by epicures, for which all the rest of the creature is sacrificed. His "header," or pitch into the water, is perfect; and his diving and his swimming under water are exactly what ours should be, entirely effected by the action of the legs. The hands, closed over the head, should act as a guard and a cutwater. If we could only acquire his power of holding breath!

First, watch a good swimmer. Notice especially how deliberate and leisurely are all his movements. His strokes are not hurried. His attitudes are graceful, because they are easy, and (like what Taghioni's dancing was) *continuous*, never quite still as a statue, and never violent as if running a race. They are the

poetry of motion and suspension. For elegance, a trapezist's performance is not to be compared to an accomplished swimmer's. He does nothing by jerks, by fits and starts. There is no thrashing of the water (except when, on his back, he does the steamer, making of his legs a sort of paddle-wheel); there is no clutching at imaginary straws, or fighting imaginary enemies. He knows exactly the moment when to press the slippery liquid and turn its resistance to his own advantage. He is confident, sure of his own safety, and therefore breathes freely instead of panting fast. It is the learner's hurry, the drowning man's hurry, which retards the one and destroys the other. As soon as the learner can strike leisurely and pause between the strokes, he has well begun (which is half done) his task of learning to swim.

Secondly, you are in the water (shallow) up to the waist. You have entered, if not head first, at least at full length, or in a lump, with a dash, a dip, or a plunge, so as to immerse your whole person at once. If you go in delicately, little by little, commencing with the tips of your toes, and letting the water creep gradually up your legs, you will probably be seized with short sudden pantings, making you say "Ha, ha, ha!" with a sort of spasm, and afterwards with headache: the whole caused by the blood being driven up from the lower extremities to the chest and head. To obviate the latter inconvenience, in the bathing establishments of Normandy they give you a warm foot-bath as soon as you come out of the sea. You stand in this, while wiping yourself dry. The blood is coaxed down to the feet, and headache after bathing rendered almost impossible. Why this excellent practice is not more widely extended is hard to say, unless because of the trouble.

You are standing in the water, then, facing the ladder or the steps by which you will finally leave it.

Lesson I. Grasp with both hands the stave of the ladder, which is on a level with, or a little below, the surface. Assume the horizontal swimming position. Get your legs well up, the feet nearly or quite to the surface, your head well down and a little on one side, so that as much as possible of your brain is submerged, and your mouth only just out of the water. The mouth even need not be above the water, except at the intervals of taking breath. Then strike out slowly, to your heart's content, with both legs at once, in regular strokes, bringing them together afterwards, until you are tired. Rest, and repeat the operation. The grand preparation for acquiring the faculty of swimming consists in daring to keep the head down, the legs up, and the whole body horizontal. Man walks erect, but he swims prone, prostrate, or reclining.

Lesson II. Repeat the same, holding to the ladder with one hand only, and either paddling with the hand open and the fingers closed; or giving the arm stroke, with the arm disengaged. Do this with each arm alternately.

Lesson III. Remember that swimming (like the performance of tours de force on the piano, like brilliant leaps in the hunting-field, like a flight on the trapeze) is one of the things that must be done with a dash. You do it, the first time you try, because you *will* to do it. Having done it once, you do it again. Therefore, when you no longer fear a horizontal position in the water—when you are convinced that you may keep your legs up, your head down, and your arms submerged, without danger of drowning—retire a couple of paces from your ladder, and resolve to swim, as if you were Leotard launched in mid-air. C'est le premier pas qui coûte. As soon as you can swim one yard, the thing is done. The distance swum, will increase rapidly with practice and the consequent increasing confidence of the swimmer. But as swimming, like mountain-climbing, calls into action muscles which are comparatively little used in our ordinary habits, it is only by gradual exercise that they can be brought to perform long-continued efforts.

Swimming is much more beneficial to the health as a gymnastic training than a mere cold bath, in which no exercise is taken. Swimming is strong exercise, which, notwithstanding, causes no loss by perspiration, since it is taken in a medium that is both cool and dense. Such loss would be considerable were the same exertion made in air, especially in warm air. Besides the strengthening influence of the reaction caused by the application of cold water to the skin, swimming increases muscular power, and acts on the nervous system as a sedative.

Of all recorded feats of swimming, unquestionably the most famous is the crossing of the Hellespont by "Leander, Captain Ekenhead, and I," "I" having been Lord Byron the poet. It has been rivalled in several instances. At the beginning of the present century, a young Swiss, residing at Immensee, used to swim across the Lake of Zug at its narrowest breadth nearly every day, to visit his sweetheart, who dwelt at Walchwyl. He continued his aquatic excursions till the close of summer, when he brought home his bride (probably in a boat, and not on his back), and enjoyed the sweets of matrimony on easier terms than he had tasted those of courtship.

Some years since, a Norfolk sailor, shipwrecked, sustained himself in a stormy sea for seventeen hours before reaching the shore. He had some small assistance from a piece of plank; but he owed his safety to swimming, floating, and power of endurance. The other swimmers just mentioned, were stimulated by passion and vanity; his efforts claim our higher sympathies, from having been inspired by a less selfish motive—the love of his wife and children.

It is worth consideration whether, at swimming races, prizes should not be offered, not only to the quickest swimmer—to him who performs a given distance in the shortest space of time—but also to him who performs the greatest distance, irrespective of the time occupied in doing it,

with full liberty to repose by floating, without touching land or aid. A quarter of a mile is a good swim; a furlong is not bad. In cases of life and death, power of endurance is mostly of greater practical utility than speed. Speed may enable you to save another—to reach a drowning man before he sinks; endurance, presence of mind, and the tenacious quality expressed by “never say die,” may often prove the means of saving yourself.

Had I a son to teach to swim, I would advise him to eschew corks, bladders, and the supporting hands of bathing companions under the chin, as well as sustaining straps held by the swimming master at the end of a pole. All those aids inspire false confidence, which fails when the support is withdrawn. Such supports have even their dangers. Corks, bladders, and straps, sometimes slip from under the armpits to the waist, or the legs; and the learner drowns, unless assisted. There have been swimming masters so imbecile as purposely to cause this accident to their pupils, for the pleasure of helping them out of it. But the grand point is to get the learner to trust and depend entirely on himself. But, surely, half drowning them is not the way to inspire beginners with confidence. With beginners, any trick or surprise—such as pushing each other down, or even dashing water unexpectedly in each other's faces—is extremely foolish and untoward. It is a thoughtless joke, and may give rise to deep-rooted fears, which reason can never overcome.

In swimming, every cause of alarm should be carefully guarded against. Thus, in diving, if, when eight or ten feet under water, you open your eyes and look up, the surface appears much nearer than it really is. It is an optical deception of which you are perfectly aware in your cooler moments, when looking *down into* clear water instead of *out of* it. You make the requisite effort to rise, and seem not to rise so quickly as you ought. You begin to be flurried and frightened; and as soon as presence of mind is gone, danger is imminent. But, being aware of the effects of refracted light, you are not alarmed, and all goes well. Now, a person who can swim, but who cannot dive, is only an incomplete swimmer. How often has a thing, or a body, to be fetched up from the bottom! Diving is the very best practice for making one's self really at home in the water. If you open your eyes while diving, remember to close them just before reaching the surface, in order to prevent the eyelashes from being drawn between the eye and the lid.

For similar reasons, it is better to learn to swim in an open stream than in a swimming-bath. On the same account, salt water is less to be recommended than fresh; for if you can swim well in the latter, you can swim well in any other. Whereas, swimmers who have learned to swim in the sea, are startled to find themselves sink so low in a lake or river, and the surprise may easily have fatal consequences.

Saline waters are not equally buoyant. That of the Dead Sea is particularly so, from holding a large quantity of salts in solution. Travellers describe the ease with which they float on it as something almost ludicrous. See Kinglake's *Eöthen*. The Mediterranean, less buoyant than the Dead Sea, is more so than the Atlantic; on certain rocky coasts it is beautifully clear and transparent, allowing you to see the coral growing, and the crawfish crawling forward or darting backward at considerable depths. Your boat seems to be hovering between two atmospheres. The Mediterranean is a saline tonic, blue and bitter. It loses by evaporation, three times more water than its rivers pour into it. But for the under-currents in the Straits of Gibraltar, it would soon become a sea of brine, and eventually a plain of salt.

The Baltic is fresher than the ocean, and consequently exerts less floating power. High up, in the Gulf of Finland, it is fresh enough to serve for drinking, and may be regarded by swimmers as river water. As to mineral waters and saline pools, they vary, from the hot spring at Dax (south of France), which is simply without any decided taste, but “not agreeable to drink,” and is used by the inhabitants for household purposes, to the salinas of South America, which are saturated brine. A spring or pond of mineral oil would be a dangerous place to attempt to swim in, were such a whim to cross any bather's brain. As to a bath of mercury, it would be next to impossible to get covered by the fluid.

If, when swimming in stagnant water, you happen to get entangled among weeds, it is of no use attempting to extricate yourself by main strength. That would make matters worse. Stop short at once. First take a full inspiration, and then disengage your arms without raising them above the water. Paddling with one hand, you then with the other remove the weeds from around your neck, and then, gently and one by one, those twisted round your legs and thighs. That done, the best way of getting out of the mess is to turn round, keeping your legs together, straight and motionless, and paddle away with your hands only, swimming dog-wise.

But, the most deadly foe of swimmers (where there are no sharks) is cramp. I myself, once a decent swimmer, rarely venture out of my depth: being subject to cramp in the legs in bed, especially after much walking exercise. I never had cramp in the water, and don't know what I should do if I had. Varying the position and attitude in swimming tends to diminish the chance of cramp. In bed, if you can once get your heel down and your toes up, cramp in the calf of the leg is mastered. For instance, one can conceive a sort of stirrup passing under the toes; by pulling that, and so getting the heel down, a slight attack of cramp might be made to pass. But cramp-threatened subjects had better keep to shallow waters. It is a curious affection, whose coming on no known medical precaution can prevent. It is a result

of the separate vitality of the muscles, independent of the general life of the individual: as evinced by the convulsive motions of slaughtered animals, and the twitching of the limbs in persons fast asleep.

ON THE MISSISSIPPI.

FROM CAIRO TO MEMPHIS.

"WHERE'S my dorg?" exclaimed Jeremiah, in a voice which Rosa Matilda would have said was tremulous with emotion, but which was really just a little scared. "Where's my dorg? Muster! Muster!"

The dog came bounding to his master, who was very glad to see him safe, for a cannon-ball had just gone tearing through the Jacob Swan, clearing the heads of those seated in the saloon, and carrying away a music-box that had been perched on the top of a tall glass jar to increase the sweetness of its tones.

The passengers had been warned that we should probably be beset by vagabond artillery on our passage down the Mississippi, and we had voluntarily taken the risk rather than be detained in the mud, malaria, and miserable camp infection, of Cairo. We might as well go to-day as to-morrow, or next month. The guerillas would not be abated while the war raged. All our passengers were urged by motives sufficiently strong to make us dare this desperate game of hazard, which might end in death. One lady was returning to New Orleans to her husband, and children, and a desolated home, with three daughters whom she had just taken from a Northern school. A delicate and beautiful young wife, in that interesting condition that Americans only speak of in the strictest confidence, was going to her husband, who was in New Orleans, a contractor for the Federal army, a speculator, or something else as lucrative and as infamous. The young wife only knew that all the luxury and comfort that money could buy awaited her if she got through safely. Some of our passengers were going South to speculate as a business, and to spoil still further a land and a people already robbed and spoiled. Most of the people huddled together like frightened sheep on the advent of the cannon-ball. The lady with the three daughters stood apart with her charge. She was very pale, but she held her frightened youngest, a girl of twelve years, firmly, and soothed the eldest, who was nervously weeping. The third was calm and pale, like her mother.

"Let us go on the hurricane-deck," said Jeremiah; "we have taken their range. For my part, I want to be above such visitors." He looked about as if seeking some one. There was a little heap of black silk in a corner, surmounted by a wet face, tangled curls, and a white pocket-handkerchief in constant use. "Mrs. Seaton," said Jeremiah, with a kind of tender reverence in his voice and manner, "will you try to go up with us? I will lend you my arm, and Mr. Hartley, I think you will take a cushion, sir."

This was a sort of respectful command, which I appreciated in America, and I proceeded to obey with cheerful alacrity. "Mrs. Livingston, you and the girls had better come. I am sure we shall be safer above." He raised his voice, and said to the crowd of scared passengers, "I am going to the hurricane-deck. I think it is the safest place, but I don't advise anybody to go. I would not take advice from king, or president, or anybody else, unless I was mighty sure he knew better than I." He tenderly passed the small balloon of black silk up the stairs, and I dutifully carried the cushion. This, with the aid of a shawl like a railway rug, made a sofa for the frightened little lady. Mrs. Livingston and her daughters grouped near us. "Put up your parasols," said Jeremiah. "There never yet was a Southerner who could shoot at a petticoat or a parnsol. I think we are as safe as a thief in a mill, up here."

"My bird!" gasped the little lady. "He hangs over the centre table in the saloon."

"I'll bring your bird," said Jeremiah, cheerfully. It was only risking his life; that was all. As he rose to go, a puff of smoke was seen upon the bank opposite, an ominous stillness brooded over us for a moment, and then another cannon-ball crashed through the boat below. Very soon a black face appeared at the head of the stairs, and the coloured cook came to us.

"Any harm done?" asked Jeremiah, collaring his dog with energy.

"O, Massa Grierson! Massa Grierson!"

"What is it, Hannibal? Can't you get it out? Have you swallowed your news?"

"O, Massa Grierson! Ole Pete done dead; top his head done gone, right clean off wid de ball."

"Anything else?"

"Nary bird done gone; cagenall done gone. O, Massa Grierson!"

"Anything else, Hannibal?"

"Ain't that nuff, Massa Grierson?"

"What are you going to do about it, Hannibal?"

"Cap'n Jones says I'm to stay up here. De rest won't come. Dey say we all done dead nex time if we stay in sight de guns."

"You'd better stay here, Hannibal, if you don't want to be done dead. Here, you Muster, don't you wander off."

The dog returned, and laid himself at his master's feet. Our seats were filled with the better class of passengers; the more ignorant stayed below, thinking we were in greater danger, because we could be seen from the shore. But Jeremiah remarked, "We have their range. Besides, they don't want to shoot us; they only want to sink the Jacob Swan. They don't locate on low banks, and on the bluffs they have to point their pieces down, or the elevation would send the shot clean over us. They know their business, and so do I. We have got their range, and we may go on our way rejoicing. There's low banks now for a good stretch; at any rate till we get near enough to Memphis to make them sneaky. I'll

"bet a hat we shall be let alone, like we was in the state prison, till we get to Memphis."

The passengers about us seemed to share in Jeremiah's confidence. They were relaxing the tension of fear. The ladies began to speak to each other. Two groups of men were playing cards; a Yankee was whittling, chewing tobacco as if for a wager, and spitting spitefully. Mrs. Livingston and her daughters were sitting with their arms around each other, near Mrs. Seaton with her limp curls and tear-wet pocket-handkerchief. Muster and I kept near Jeremiah, who considered himself somewhat like the father of a family in difficulties. "I never was in love with the mighty muddy Mississippi," said he. "I had my small amusements on the river before the war, and Muster had his. He saved a poor fellow from drowning just about here, three year ago, just about now. I believe he remembers it as well as I do. Muster, show us how you held the man above water." He knotted his handkerchief about a cane, and threw it down. The dog seized the knot in his teeth and gravely supported the cane. "That's just the way he held the man's head above water by the knot of his cravat. He swam down stream, and met the boat, and when we took the poor fellow aboard, Muster was as glad as a Christian. Poor Greene, he'll remember you, Muster, till he goes to kingdom come, and, for aught I know, afterward. I must tell you about it. We were going to New Orleans, and at Cairo we took aboard a party that I was not happy to see, not a bit of it. I don't like snags walking about on two legs. The party consisted of a man about thirty or thirty-five years old, with his wife and a young baby, and his mother. The young man was what I call a hard character. He wore a grey coat and pants, and purple velvet vest, with a massive gold, or it might be gold plated, chain across the breast. His long black hair was curled and shiny, and smelt like a barber's shop. He had a red fluffy face, and his eyes were black and wicked. He had been what many people call good-looking—good, I do not think he could have been with such a mother. She was a tall and stately woman—quite as tall as her son, and about half a century old. She wore a false front, and her forehead was shaved to make it look more expansive and intellectual. I can't answer for her age very accurately, for she was made up altogether in the most elaborate fashion, and was dressed, even on the steam-boat, in the richest moire antique and the costliest lace. There is not a sin of the civilised world that was not written on that woman's face. I have seen a great many women, with little enough that was womanly about them, but I never saw one who seemed to me so bad as this gambler's mother.

"The fact is, it was a party of gamblers. The poor little wife was a trained stool-pigeon, and even the pretty little baby was dressed to attract attention and lead to acquaintance. The wife was very pretty, but struck me as a strange compound. She seemed loving and gentle, as I dare say she might have been in other circum-

stances. She was dressed too well, and wore too much jewellery. 'This I afterwards found was not her fault. She was made to play her part in attracting her husband's victims. The coquetry of her appearance did not correspond with the expression of her face. There was a sad look in it that made me pity her. They had come from Canada, they said, and were going to New Orleans. I kept my eyes on them; and so, I found, did the experienced chambermaid, who had been on the river too long not to know such customers at first sight.

"Among our fellow-passengers was a gentleman who called himself Mr. Browne, who seemed to me to be either an actor travelling incog., or a gentleman who intended to adopt the dramatic profession. We got acquainted over a sherry cobbler, became intimate with our noses in our two first mint juleps, and when we had a little private party in our corner, he amused us by imitating those on board, or others we happened to know, very cleverly. Among the rest, he took off the roud-looking gambler, Rodden, as he called himself, and the stately mother. He had made up his mind about them pretty much as I had made up mine.

"Among the other occupants of the great cabin, where society gets about as well mingled as you ever find it in this world, was a young man, a Mr. John Greene, a master carpenter from Chicago, going to Memphis. He was simple, honest, and as verdant as his name. He got acquainted with everybody, and told of his means, intentions, and prospects, as if he thought everybody as innocent as himself.

"Rodden made a set at Greene as soon as he heard that he had money, but not by making the first advances. The old lady talked with him in the most motherly way about his home, his prospects, and sweethearts. The young wife, who seemed at times to scorn everything about her, smiled on him sweetly, and gave him her baby to hold. Whoever she may have feared or hated, she loved the baby. It was, I believe, the bond that held her to the gambler and his mother, and made her do their infernal bidding. But for the baby, she might have jumped into the river to escape a tyranny that hour by hour became more apparent to me, as I watched the drama playing before me.

"Rodden, of course, had made up his mind to plunder the young carpenter, and it had to be done before we got to Memphis. They had played in a little family party at whist and euchre for candies and sherry cobbler, or champagne. Greene generally won, and was confident in his luck, and a little proud of his skill. He was fascinated also with the pretty woman, who could wind him round her fingers. Then he tried his hand with Rodden alone, and won thirty dollars, as he boasted to Browne, at half a dollar a game. It was of no use to advise him. He was as conceited as he was honest. Like many very green persons, he believed himself an excellent judge of character, and as sharp as a needle.

"The night before we were to reach Memphis

Rodden and Greene were playing, and Greene was flushed with his luck and drinking more than usual. Browne watched them till he was tired, and turned in at about eleven o'clock. Then Rodden and Greene drank more, or stronger drinks than usual, and they played for higher stakes. It was the old story—infatuation, madness, and, of course, the loss of the last dollar Greene had in the world. Then came another insanity, worse than that of the drunkard and the gambler—the insanity of despair. Instead of going to his berth, he ascended to the hurricane-deck. Then he took off his coat and vest, and wrote on a scrap of paper with a pencil this just legible note:

“TO THE CAPTAIN OF THIS BOAT. Rodden has robbed me when I was drunk, of three thousand dollars, all I have in the world. I am going to drown myself. Please thank Mr. Browne for me, and tell him I am sorry I did not hear to him.

‘JOHN GREENE.’

“This paper he pinned to his vest, and then quietly jumped into the river; but he was not born to be drowned—not that time, any way. There was a cry from the watch on deck, of a man overboard. I sprang out of my state-room with Muster. ‘Save him, Muster!’ said I. The dorg didn’t need another invitation, and he caught him and held him up, just as he showed you, until the steamer’s boat picked them both up, and brought them on board again. The captain came down on Rodden, but Rodden drew a bowie-knife and showed fight. The boat had touched at Memphis, and before anything could be done he broke away and was clear. His mother, elegant and imperturbable as ever, had their baggage taken ashore, and we were soon on our way, like the river, and life, and all that sort of thing, and I forgot all about the adventure. One can’t remember everything, as the man said when he went to the woods to chop and forgot his axe. I got through with my business at New Orleans. It was a city then, full of wealth and beauty, lying, a purple grape, in the sun, full of luscious pulp and sweetness. Well, it is just like a grape skin now, sucked and thrown under foot to be trodden on; but we’ll adjourn that subject.

“On the fifth of May I left New Orleans to return North. I went on board that palace of a boat, Black Hawk, and almost the first person I saw was Rodden’s mother. There she was, with the same stately presence, the same shaven forehead, and false front, the same rich lace and moire antique: to which were now added flashing jewels; and there was the pretty little woman, with her baby, now about a year old, and both dressed in the same showy manner; and presently I saw the hard-faced gambler, Rodden. The young mother and her baby looked pale and ill; the old mother and her hopeful looked flushed and eager for prey. I paid so much attention to those people, and thought so much of what they had probably been doing all winter

in New Orleans, that I rather neglected the other passengers; but the day after we started I observed a particularly green-looking individual, with light flaxen hair, an awkward slouched hat, blue homespun pantaloons, and a battenut-coloured coat, which seemed to me both homespun and home made; he had old yarn gloves on, which he never removed, except to put on some old leather or kid ones. I watched the gambler, for it had somehow transpired that this gawky homespun individual had been to New Orleans with a considerable cargo of bacon and chere. I thought of poor Greene and his three thousand dollars. One day I saw Rodden and the stranger—‘Ike,’ so he called himself—together.

“No matter about my name, mister,” said he, ‘call me Ike; I’ll answer to that, till the cows come home. You can’t come to over me calling me mister. How do I know but you are one of them fellows that plays poker, and allus wins?’

“I never played but three games of poker in my life,” said Rodden, ‘but I’ll play euchre with you for the drinks.’

“No you *don’t*. Look o’ here, mister,” said he, pulling down the lower eyelash, ‘do you see anything green *there*?’

“I see that you have cut your eye-teeth,” said Rodden. ‘I wouldn’t undertake to cheat you, if cheating was my trade, which, I am happy to say, it is not.’

“You don’t say! Good-lookin’, but ye can’t come in. I shan’t play for the drinks, nor for nothin’ else. I promised Susy, when I come away, that I wouldn’t tich a kaird, the hull time I was off; an’ no more I won’t. You see, five thousand dollars’ worth of bacon and chere wouldn’t be no shakes at all to one o’ them fellers that plays poker.’

“That’s so,” said Rodden. ‘You are wise.’

“Yes, an’ that ain’t the hull on’t, for my money’s in the cap’n’s safe, and, what’s more, it’ll stay there till half an hour afore I land.’

“At——?” said Rodden, suggestively.

“At—yes, *at*; but where *at* is, you’ll have to find out, for I told Susy I’d keep dark as a woodchuck’s hole, and not talk to nobody mor’n was raily necessary. As to you, I wouldn’t mind tilling you, for I took to you at vonst. You are smart, but you can’t keep a hotel, or you wouldn’t come at me about kairds. You might have known I wouldn’t play, by the looks of me.’

“Rodden was persevering; the man in homespun was firm. The young wife seemed more ill, terrified, and miserable, every hour; the old mother more hard, proud, and imperious. She would take the baby, keep it from its mother, and I believe pinch it, simply to torture the poor woman. Rodden never interfered to protect her. What a life that poor thing was leading, and what a fate for her child! One evening I heard Rodden talking to the gawky man about play.

“Look o’ here now,” said the latter, ‘ef you ever say kairds to me agin, I’ll pitch into ye. I

am a man o' my word, specially when my word's given to Susy. But I have got a pocket full of dice, and they ain't loaded dice nuther. Ef you want to play enough to bet something handsome agin my terbacker box, I'll play with you."

"He drew out a very ancient silver box, of about five dollars' weight, and laid it on the table. Rodden sat down to business, with a gleam in his dark eye that meant mischief. He won it—then lost it. It was lost and won several times, but rested at last in the pocket of the countryman.

"Smart fellow, but you can't keep a hotel, nor win my terbacker-box," said he.

"The next day they played again, and he lost his box, and watch, and thirty dollars; but next time he won again, and so surprisingly, that the gambler lost pretty nearly all he had to lose, and then the countryman refused to play any longer.

"Not to-night, anyhow," said he. "I might be willing to play to-morrow, but I want to sleep with my pockets full one night. I allus put my own money in the cap'n's safe, but I'll keep this ere that was yourn, in my berth to-night to sleep on, just for luck."

"That foolish fellow will be robbed to-night," I said to myself, "and maybe murdered." I had such a presentiment of mischief, that I could not go to sleep, and at midnight, when I heard him go to bed, I knocked at his state-room door, and said, "Will you allow me to speak to you?"

"I know what you're gonter say?" said he, "but never you lay awake on my account. I ain't a baby, and I know what that Rodden is gonter do, as well as you do. But he's a barkin' up the wrong tree. Look o' here, mister," said he, and he drew out a tremendous bowie-knife from the back of his neck, and showed me under his pillow a six-shooter. "I reckon these ere will do his business, if he comes arter me and my wminins."

"I left the man, reassured, and returned to my berth, but not to sleep. The boat went snorting and roaring on her way up the gloomy river. It was a high flood, and if any accident happened to the boat, there was a poor chance for the passengers. More than once we had steamed past the floating corpses from burnt or exploded steamers. As I lay thinking of all this, I heard a step. The countryman slept with his door open. He would 'choke to death at once,' he said, if he didn't get the air. People brought up in log-houses are apt to feel so. I sprang to my feet, and crept towards his state-room. The door was shut. There was the sudden explosion of a pistol, followed by a fierce cry. I opened the door. Rodden had fallen on the floor, but he sprang to his feet, with a cut across his hand, and one of his ears shot off. He dashed out of the door as the countryman exclaimed:

"That varmint!"

"Are you hurt?"

"Not a bit of it." He had a slight cut on

his hand, however. Rodden had scarcely left the state-room when he was grappled by the porter, who, like myself, had been watching him. The porter had seen the brief conflict, which he had not time to prevent. The rascal struggled hard, but he was soon disarmed; bound securely, and locked up in a state-room. His loss of blood helped, perhaps, to conquer him. I asked a lady, who had come from her state-room in a dressing-gown to indulge her natural curiosity, to go to the poor wife and tell her the sad truth, that her husband was wounded and a felon.

"Oh, what have I not suffered with him and her?" said she, wringing her little hands. "If I could but return to my once happy home!"

"And why can you not?" asked the lady. It was the old, old story. She had run away from home and married a showy scamp without the consent of her parents. The captain, the countryman, and I, went aside to consult as to what was to be done.

"Wait a minute," said the countryman; and he went into his state-room, and next instant came out in a dressing-gown, another and a natural head of hair, and without the everlasting old gloves. It was my acquaintance Mr. Browne, and a capital actor too.

"I determined to serve out that fellow if I ever had a chance to do so," said he, "when he robbed that poor carpenter, and drove him crazy. He got cured of that by a small dose of water-cure in the Mississippi, and the help of Muster. I shall hunt him up, and give him back his money."

"Muster wagged his tail, as if he remembered all about it, and approved of returning the cash.

"The poor little wife decided to return home. The mother, deprived of her son, did not attempt to keep her ill-used daughter-in-law.

"When Rodden found that he was to be taken to the jail at Maysville, he sent for his wife. 'It's all up with me for the present,' said he. 'They have got me foul. You had better go home, Lib, and stay with the old folks, and behave yourself. Mother is no fit company for you, unless I am about.'

"The little wife answered only with her sobs. She held the baby for his father to kiss him, but she did not offer him her own lips or cheek. He was her tyrant no longer. She had found friends. She would escape. We took her to her paternal home on the Ohio, and saw her kindly received by a worthy father and loving mother. Mr. Browne went with me, and left a thousand dollars of the sum he had won from Rodden, in her father's hands.

"Rodden was tried for a murderous assault with intent to rob, and sent to the penitentiary for twenty-five years. He will be sixty when he has served out his time. The mother tried hard to save him, and may get him pardoned after a while. The little wife became an exemplary and happy mother.

"I don't keep up acquaintance with all the world and his wife, because I can't; but I keep track of Mr. Browne, and when he is acting in England—with another name that I won't men-

tion—and I'm in America, I feel lonesome, that's a fact."

As Jeremiah finished his story, we came near to Memphis, and all landed, safe and sound, from the Jacob Swan.

THE BEAUTIFUL GATE.

It is a fair tradition, one of old,
That, at the Gate of Heaven called Beautiful,
The souls of those to whom we ministered
On Earth, shall greet us as we enter in
With grateful records of those lowly deeds
Of Christian charity, wherewith frail man
Proffers his humble loan unto his Lord.

May we not so believe, since He hath said
That, inasmuch as it was done to one
Of these his little ones, 'twas done to him?

Oh, think if this be true, how many eyes
Whose weeping thou hast stilled, shall glisten there,
How many hearts whose burthen thou hast shared,
And heavy feet whose steps were turned by thee,
Back to their homes elastic through the joy
Of new found hope, and sympathy, and love,
Shall welcome thee within the Gates of Bliss,
The Golden City of Jerusalem!

THE "CORPS OF COMMISSIONAIRES.

THOROUGH trustworthiness is as the soul of honour. It is something to have fought and bled for one's country by sea or land, and to have retired with wounds upon a good name and a pension. But many a brave soldier invalided upon a pension that is not a livelihood has found it more desirable than possible to make the crown a pound. Now, however, there is one thing, at any rate, that he may do to that end. The invalided soldier and sailor may be proud to enter a well-disciplined corps that earns for the wearer of its uniform the confidence of strangers, and enables him to live by his honour in a calling that depends for its very existence upon the trustworthiness of those who follow it. Any corps organised for the service of the public upon such terms is one of which the invalided soldier may make it a really noble object of ambition to uphold the good name himself, and to keep the more thoughtless of his comrades from abusing it.

There is now firmly established such a corps of trusty pensioners ready to be useful in many ways to the people of London and some other of our great cities, but especially of London, in the Corps of Commissionaires. It was established about five years ago by Captain Edward Walter, who saw—in the creation of such a body of industrious volunteers pledging themselves to the necessary strictness of discipline—a way of giving honourable employment to the invalided soldiers and sailors who deserve well of their country, but with the best will in the world to earn their bread, find it very difficult to earn anything beyond the scanty pension to which

they have become entitled by wounds and good service.

There is continual want, all over town, of a direct and safe hand by which to secure the immediate transmission of messages, letters, parcels; want, in short, of a ready and complete supplement to the postal service in which anything can be done that lies within the power of a prompt, intelligent, and faithful messenger. The disabled soldier cannot stand with his medals on his breast at the street corner as an isolated applicant for trust of this sort. To do that, he must beg by word of mouth or by placard, for the public confidence in himself as a poor and unknown speculator, so taking a degrading road to an extremely doubtful end. But, let the trustworthy men be banded together in a corps as well disciplined as any in her Majesty's service, let the discipline asked for by these men on their own behalf be notoriously such, and so firmly maintained that want of integrity in any one entails certain dismissal, and the uniform of such a corps will be the dress of gentlemen, though worn only by men who have seen active service in positions technically below the grade of the commissioned officer. The dress will be the badge even of more wealth than that which clothed Dives in purple and fine linen:

For 'tis the mind that makes the body rich;
And as the sun breaks through the darkest clouds,
So honour peereth through the meanest habit.

Give the corps a distinctive name as the Corps of Commissionaires, military organisation under a clear ruling head, and an easily known uniform, which is not a "mean habit" for honour to peer through, and each Commissionaire may take his daily post in the way of business with the credit of the entire corps placed to his account. This uniform tells not only what his business is, but that he may be trusted in it, and the life that was committed to forced idleness and poverty becomes honourably useful, and is saved from the pinch of want.

Captain Walter having hit upon this method of befriending the old soldier, not only suggested it, but carried it out by his own personal energy. He began with seven men. By steady increase from year to year, that number has already grown to two hundred and sixty-four. Twenty of these are in out-quarters; one hundred and twenty are in permanent situations, exclusively employed in great houses of business, or wherever else there may be continual need of a reliable messenger. Of the Commissionaires stationed conveniently at various points in the streets of London, there are fifty in the east central, and forty-nine in the west central districts; while there are twenty at the headquarters down Exchange-court, in the Strand, ready for immediate service from that station, or for temporary supply of any post from which the Commissionaire who attends it has been sent on a duty that will keep him more than four hours

absent. The staff was increased by thirty men in the Exhibition year, and is at all times ready to grow to the extent warranted by the requirements of the public. Clever Commissionaires are always on the look-out for a new post, and the man who finds a new post, keeps it for six months, and proves it to have been well chosen, gets a gratuity of ten shillings out of the funds of the corps. A good post is one that yields an average of from three shillings to three-and-sixpence a day; three-and-sixpence a day represents the highest average earning of the Commissionaire, in addition to his pension from the country, and to this scale the charge of a guinea a week for the permanent attachment of a Commissionaire to any house or institution is adjudged.

The great post is of course the Royal Exchange, which finds full duty for one-and-twenty members of the corps, besides half a dozen or more counterfeits, these being old members discharged for dishonesty, or others, who imitate as closely as they safely can the uniform of the corps, but are always to be distinguished from the honest men by being unable to give their employers the right ticket. This ticket, for the protection of the corps as well as for his own security, every employer of a Commissionaire should take on giving him any commission. It furnishes the means of identifying the Commissionaire at his headquarters in case of neglect or imposition, and as it has upon it the badge of the corps and the signature, "Charles Handford, Sergeant, Corps of Commissionaires," the man who is not really a member of the corps is unable to give it. Again, on the back of the Commissionaire's ticket is printed the tariff of charges; and overcharge is, by the rules of the corps, a breach of discipline punished for the first offence by a fine of double the amount, the fine being made payable to the person overcharged, with a request that he will send it as a donation to King's College Hospital—that being the hospital which undertakes the medical care of the corps. The second offence, if wilful, is punished by immediate dismissal. Again, the holder of the printed ticket, and he only, holds the guarantee of the corps for the safety of property up to the value of ten pounds, or up to twenty pounds where a Commissionaire wearing chevrons has been employed.

The average rate of earnings shows that the tariff cannot be lower than it is; and it is low enough to justify a constantly increasing habit among the public of employing the Commissionaires. Among the pensioners in the corps was an old Waterloo soldier, who lately died, and was ready with the rest to walk with a message or a parcel his half mile for twopence, or his mile for threepence, or to be paid for his trusty service at the rate of sixpence an hour, with a condition that, if no fare was paid for him by boat, rail, or omnibus, two miles and a half an hour should be his slowest pace. In carrying large parcels, a penny a mile is charged for every seven pounds

over a stone. That Waterloo man had a right to take his ease in Chelsea Hospital, where he would have cost the country fifty pounds a year; but he preferred earning the fifty pounds, by thus giving valuable labour for it. There is an old soldier now in this corps who wears seven medals. There is another who has been wounded in the head, has lost an ear, has had his left arm removed at the socket, and is wounded in the right hand, yet, thanks to this corps, he is not disabled from living by his industry. The youngest man in the corps is a pensioner of one-and-twenty, who has been shot through the neck, and invalidated upon a shilling a day; the oldest is of more than threescore, a one-armed Commissionaire who stands at the Post-office. Of the two hundred and sixty-four men now in the corps, forty are sailors. It is open also to members of the police force who have been wounded in the performance of their duty, but at present it contains none but those who have been soldiers or sailors.

Such is the general character of a corps which owes its existence not only to the first suggestion, but also to the continued active support and superintendence of its founder. The seven men who were the first members of the corps when it was founded, in February, eighteen fifty-nine, could be managed with an occasional hour's supervision. As the corps grew, the resolve to establish it firmly by strict individual attention to its interests led to a regular demand for the voluntary and gratuitous expenditure of at least eight hours' daily labour. From the founder, also, and his personal friends, the corps received loans amounting to about a thousand pounds for the furniture of barracks, establishment of the band of Commissionaires—which may now be heard playing of evenings before sunset in the Cambridge enclosure of St. James's Park (and through which, with help of a school, sons of Commissionaires are trained for band service in the army)—for adjutant's salary, and other charges. It is now time for the public to secure permanence to an institution of proved value to itself, and to a body of men peculiarly deserving of its favours. The thousand pounds that have been lent, the founder and his friends put out of consideration; and the corps of Commissionaires, out of debt, requires only a permanent organisation. Of that we will speak presently. Let us first give a few more exact details of the organisation to which only assured permanence is wanting.

No man can be a Commissionaire unless he has served in the Army, Navy, Militia, or Police, and earned a pension. His character must bear the strictest examination. Preference is given to men who have been severely wounded when on duty. Soldiers of good character but broken health, whose temporary pensions have expired, may be Commissionaires if they deposit twenty-five pounds in the Savings-bank of the corps, which money will be liable to forfeiture in case of dishonesty proved against them in a court of justice. Commissionaires whose pensions expire

after they have joined, do not remain in the corps unless they have been promoted to the first class. There are two classes, and every man on his appointment is placed in the second, where he must remain at least three months. If found smart and intelligent, punctual in payments, and for three months have no serious breakage of rule charged against him, the second-class man is promoted to the first class, his remaining in it being dependent on continued merit. By twelve months' good service in the first class, the Commissionaire earns the good-conduct badge, and only the men who have made their way to the good-conduct badge get the good posts, or are recommended to permanent situations. After twelve months' possession of the first good-conduct badge, a second bar is earned if the Commissionaire has laid by five pounds in the savings-bank; and upon like conditions more bars may be added afterwards.

No man enters the Corps of Commissionaires otherwise than at his own particular request after signing a form of agreement, together with the rules and regulations, and paying one pound as guarantee, which is forfeited in case of dismissal from the corps, but returned in case of resignation, after any sum that he may owe to the corps has been deducted. To his voluntary pledge the Commissionaire is very strictly held; for, upon this, depends the public confidence, which is his bread in his new calling. Provision is made for strict and just enforcement of the regulations. The men are soldiers trained to discipline, of which they might not always have seen the use; as Commissionaires, they cannot fail to see that upon the credit of the corps, and the known strictness of its discipline, depends the value of the uniform of the Commissionaire as passport to a kind of employment that involves much trust, and is the more honourable in being trust from strangers who are content to know him by his company, his uniform, and his credentials.

To each man his post is assigned. He attends morning parade at half-past eight on summer mornings, and at nine in winter, reporting himself in a book kept for the purpose at some place that may be used as the depôt of his station, takes his stand, trim and soldier-like, at his appointed place. He must be clean and neat. There is a fine of threepence for appearing at parade unshaven, long-haired, or with clothes out of repair. He must wear his hair according to the custom of her Majesty's service, but is advised to grow a beard and moustache. He is not to lounge at his post, nor to quit it, unless employed, nor to converse with persons of discreditable appearance. He is not to smoke in the streets; the fine for so doing being a shilling. He is not to enter a public-house during the hours of duty. When he has to ask his way, he must apply at a respectable shop of another kind, or ask a policeman. It is expected that, for the credit of the corps, Commissionaires will abstain from frequenting public-houses at all

times. Drunkenness is punished with dismissal.

When employed, the Commissionaire must give notice of his absence from his post, and of the probable duration of his absence, to the principal post of his district; and, if his time of absence will exceed four hours, he is to send notice to head-quarters, in order that his place may be supplied, and other employers may not be inconvenienced by his absence. As all employment of the corps is distributed with due regard to the interests of the whole body, no man may take special employment without leave, and no leave is given for the employment of a Commissionaire in delivering circulars more than a quarter of a mile from his post between the hours of nine in the morning and five in the evening. With such cautions and provisions against removing a man from his post, the delivery of bills and circulars is undertaken as a regular part of the occasional business of the Commissionaire. The Commissionaire is expected, when possible, to avoid giving short notice of any desired leave of absence, as it is a principle of the corps that no post, when once established, shall be left vacant for a single day.

Permanent employment is distributed, as far as the wishes of employers will permit, to men of the first class by seniority. When a club, bank, hotel, or other house of business, asks for the exclusive use of a Commissionaire, it is requested that choice will be made from the first three men on the roster, and that the first will be taken if he be not unfit; but the full satisfaction of employers and the welfare of the corps being identical, any man specially qualified for a particular employment is allowed to take it. The Commissionaire privately employed, if he have leave of absence from Sunday and Wednesday parade, must report himself weekly at head-quarters, at some time convenient to his employer, between seven o'clock on Wednesday morning and eleven A.M. on Thursday.

In the office of the Commissionaires' barracks, down Exchange-court, in the Strand, is a sergeant-major on duty between half-past eight in the morning and five in the evening. He inspects the men detailed for duty during the day, sees that they are rightly distributed, keeps the log-book, the descriptive record of the men, the daily attendance book, and the address book of men living out of barracks, and he has charge of the correspondence of the corps, acknowledging if not answering every letter by return of post.

The discipline of the men is military, their relation to their sergeant-major and the non-commissioned officers is that of soldiers, and "every Commissionaire will, on all occasions, pay the usual compliments to military bodies, and never omit the customary salutes to officers of her Majesty's service dressed in uniform." A scale of fines assures strictness of discipline, and as the fines are for offences against the general

welfare and interest of the corps, when incurred they are never wholly remitted, unless they be fines under fourpence for small oversights in men against whom no fault has been recorded for three months.

Careful provision has been made, also, for the establishment and safe maintenance of a Sick and Burial Fund, and every Commissaire is required to provide for his days of infirmity by beginning, within three months after his appointment to the corps, to lay by not less than a shilling in the savings-bank of the corps, or in some other institution or security approved by the commanding officer. Of this he may not, without leave withdraw more than the interest, or any money that he has deposited in excess of the rate of a shilling a week; but all that has accumulated will be paid to him, without deduction, within a fortnight of his resignation or dismissal. The money in the savings-bank cannot be forfeited except by conviction of dishonesty in a court of law, and then only to the extent necessary to make good the loss occasioned by the act of which the offender is convicted.

The rifle-green tunic, forage cap, winter trousers with red beading, summer trousers, pouch and belt, waterproof cape and great-coat, forming the uniform of the Commissaire, are provided out of the Clothing Fund, to which he pays for it eightpence a week. When he quits the corps, the uniform must be returned into the quartermaster's store.

There is also a General Fund, to which every Commissaire pays five shillings on joining the corps, and subscribes afterwards a shilling a month; it is to this fund that the fines are paid. When a Commissaire gets permanent employment he pays the amount of a week's profit from it to the General Fund, and for temporary employment given from head-quarters he pays a penny in the shilling. Men stationed on public posts keep their whole earnings without deduction, except when they obtain employment through the office. The General Fund is liable for the payment of non-commissioned officers of the corps, and other incidental expenses of the system, and it is charged with all losses occurring to the corps.

But it is clear that this General Fund, raised by the most equitable forms of taxation on the men, can only yield a very small exchequer. All the funds are for the benefit of the men, and no profit whatever is deducted from them. The Clothing Fund pays the wages of the quartermaster sergeant who serves that department; but, beyond that, is actually spent upon the clothes. If any cheapness of material leaves money in hand after the regulation dress of fixed quality and pattern has been furnished, the money is paid back to the men in the shape of a pair of boots every year or every two years. The pensions of the men are all made payable at Regent's Park Barracks, and on pension-day each Commissaire settles outstanding accounts with his corps. But the amount that goes to

the General Fund can never, with fairness to the men, be made to bear the entire cost of managing the corps.

And so we come back to the difficulty which the public is now asked to come and see and conquer. Hitherto it has been met by the unstinted liberality of the founder of this admirable institution, but he cannot live for ever; and, if he could, it would be poor return for his beneficent care and thought in the creation and complete organisation of such a corps, that he should be required to slave for the rest of his days over the mechanical superintendence of its details. He has made a machine complete in every part, capable of important service; he has turned it out in the finest working order, as a free gift to the public, and is the maker and donor of the engine to be paid by the demand that he shall be also for the rest of his life its stoker and driver? The founder of this corps asks nothing for himself, but the assurance that what he has created and set going will henceforth be kept going and put to its right use. Essential to the existence of the corps is a staff that shall be the centre of its discipline. The annual expense of a sufficient staff is calculated at a very modest sum—three hundred and fifty pounds.

From the regiments and ships of army and navy, for whose invalided men it makes thoughtful provision, and from the busy men of wealthy London, to whom this corps is becoming every year more valuable, it ought to be most easy to obtain as much friendly and considerate help as would fill up the measure of a slender endowment fund, and make the corps of Commissaires a permanent institution, expanding and doing its good service evermore. Eight thousand pounds will be an adequate endowment. It is proposed by the founder that subscribers of ten pounds to the Endowment Fund shall be life governors of the corps, and that a regiment whose united subscriptions amount to twenty-five pounds shall be perpetual governor, with a right to nominate one of its body to watch over its interests. It is proposed, also, that the governors thus constituted meet annually to elect trustees, and that the future trustees appoint the commanding officer, and see that the fundamental rules are carried out.

An Endowment Fund, then, is now being raised, and Sir J. Y. Scarlett, Generals Brook Taylor and David Russell, Colonel H. A. White, Colonel Wetherall, Colonel Shadwell, and Colonel Sargent, have consented to act as its provisional trustees. Subscriptions are received by Messrs. Cox and Co., Army Agents, Craig's-court, Charing-cross, or at any of the branches of the Westminster Bank, but there is no reason in nature why it should not raise small money and postage stamps upon the sergeant-major of the corps at the barracks in Exchange-court, Strand, W.C. The small additional cost of management that will be caused by the certain growth of the corps

would be met by the consequent increase of the General Fund, so that the slender endowment really would give us for good and all the use of an institution that has few equals for its practical union of many uses with a most beneficent design.

MURDER BY MISTAKE.

It was my fortune, in the year eighteen hundred and —, to be quartered with my regiment in the Bermudas, that picturesque group of coral-formed islands, which, by a corruption of the name of Sir George Summers, the first governor of the colony, who was shipwrecked there, has erroneously been called "The Summer Isles." In one respect, indeed, the name is not misapplied, for, so far as climate is concerned, eternal summer reigns throughout the year, the coldest winds from the north, in January and February, only reducing the mercury in the thermometer to the level of "temperate," while, for the remaining ten months, the heat of the dog-star rages.

Seen, as I saw the islands first, they present an aspect of incomparable beauty. Navigation, as practised on board the old transports, was not always a science of extreme accuracy, and the tub which contained the head-quarters of the regiment to which I belonged made the southern shore of the principal Bermudian island first, instead of bearing down upon it from the opposite quarter, seeing that we had sailed from the north, our port of departure being Halifax, in Nova Scotia. It was about noon when we came in sight of a low range of cedar-covered hills, separated from the deep water on which we floated by a long ominous line of surf, and knew that we had reached the "still-vert Bermoothes,"—called by their first discoverers, the Spaniards, "Los Diabolos," and believed by all mariners to be inhabited by devils and other evil spirits, until the true relation of "Edward Strachey, Esq." (A. D. 1610). swept away the tradition, and "delivered the world from a foule and dangerous error." The wind being light, we coasted slowly along this breaker-beaten shore, keeping the coral reefs at a most respectful distance, and it was only as the day declined—a native pilot having meanwhile come on board—that we found ourselves abreast of an entrance to the great harbour, practicable only for small boats. As the transport could not reach the proper channel till the following morning, a small party of us, impelled by the natural impatience of landsmen to get on shore, availed ourselves of the pilot's boat, and left the ship that evening. The moon rose soon after we quitted the vessel, and was fast climbing the skies, when the boat shot beneath the steep cliff of a frontier island crowned by a ruinous fort. Just then the breeze fell, and we lay becalmed, but only for a few moments, oars being quickly out to supply the want of sail. The scene was one of extreme

loveliness, and presented an effect almost theatrical, so sudden was the change within the rocky barrier. The dazzling moonlight fell on snow-white walls of scattered cottages, half buried in thickets of perfumed cedars; the clear blue heavens were fretted with golden stars of unusual size; the sea sparkled round our track, and was dashed in gleams of fire from the boatmen's oars; and our way lay amongst innumerable islets, whose outline was marked by the graceful foliage of the feathery palmetto. A mind filled with poetical ideas, such as that of a young man of two-and-twenty, with no more knowledge of the world than usually belongs to that age, might readily have fancied that in a fairy region like this no evil could possibly dwell, but youthful impressions by moonlight are not the safest to rely upon.

For nearly a couple of hours we threaded our course through this bay of islands till a wider harbour opened before us, and lying in a complete amphitheatre of cedar-crowned hills, the glittering town of St. George's came in sight. This was our destination, and, after answering the challenge of the sentinel posted on the landing wharf, we stepped on shore, admiring the beauty and perfect tranquillity of the place. It was a small square, surrounded on three sides by lofty white buildings, each with its broad dark green balcony, and shaded by rows of that graceful tree called locally "The Pride of India," a species of Fraxinus, whose leaves resemble the mountain ash, and whose lilac flowers cluster like those of the laburnum. We involuntarily stopped before the largest of these houses, hoping that it was the hotel, but we were mistaken; it was only the residence of one of the leading merchants of St. George's, its doors hospitably open as those of an inn to all comers by daylight, but at that hour closed in the peaceful sleep that wrapped the whole town. It was not very long afterwards that this quiet spot presented a very different appearance.

Garrison towns, in small colonies like the Bermudas, owe their chief social attraction to the free intercourse which prevails between the military and official occupants and the wealthier storekeepers. There was, at the period I am speaking of, the Government House for great occasions, but the real enjoyment of society was mainly to be found in the pleasant abodes of the mercantile community. Foremost of this class in St. George's was a gentleman named F—, the portal of whose house might well have borne the inscription which I have seen in one of the old Italian cities,—Sienna, if I remember rightly,—where "Patet janua, cor magis" assures the guests that the heart offers even a readier welcome than the unclosed entrance. This generous-minded man was everybody's friend, less for the sake of his large hospitality than for the personal merits by which he was distinguished. He was of a frank and cheerful nature, by no means unlettered, though a very slight acquaintance with books went a long way in those islands, and was

seldom of native growth; he had made many voyages in the earlier part of his prosperous career, was shrewd and observant, his conversation abounded in curious anecdote, and few whom I have known deserved the epithet of "good fellow" better than Henry F—. At the time of our arrival in Bermuda, F—, a tall, stout, handsome man, was some five-and-thirty years of age, and had been married about three, to one of those pale, delicate, dark-eyed Bermudian girls, whom Moore the poet has rightly described as not absolutely handsome, but having an affectionate languor in their look and manner which interests even more than beauty. Two children were already the fruits of this marriage, and there was the promise of a third at no very distant date.

Such was F—'s condition, and if ever a man was happy, he seemed and deserved to be so. To complete this sketch of his domestic relations, I must add that his only sister was the wife of Dr. H—, a surgeon on the staff then quartered at St. George's, a man of high medical attainments, but of somewhat irascible disposition, the hot temper of the Highlander often declaring itself on very slight provocation.

The laissez-aller of colonial life is highly favourable to the establishment of friendly feelings amongst the classes that mingle together on terms of equality. Here and there the morgue of the English aristocrat leads some silly fellow to affect to look down upon the storekeeper, but in a general way the case is completely reversed; and with reason—to speak of self-interest only—for the storekeeper is, for the most part, the banker of the stranger in the colony, and if accommodation in cashing bills be required, to him must the application for money be referred. There was no one in Bermuda who met an officer's wants more promptly than F—. He gave, perhaps, no higher premium than others, for his dealings were strictly commercial; but he never made a difficulty of advancing cash on the simple word of the applicant, and the confidence he displayed met with a corresponding return; the banker became, in every instance, the friend of the person whom he accommodated; assuredly, among the rest, he was mine.

A young military officer has not much in his power to offer in requital for the kindness he receives at the hands of a civilian. His opportunity is generally confined to an invitation to the regimental mess, on what is known in the army as "a stranger day." F— soon became a frequent guest with us, and at last it came to my turn to be his host. We had then been about three months in the island, and hearing that the messman had secured a fine turtle—there had, moreover, been a gale of wind, bringing a quantity of golden plover to the island, some of which were safe to figure in his bill of fare—I sent a note to F—, asking him to dine with me on the following "stranger day." He accepted at once, not formally, but in jocose terms, alluding to the extra attractions of the

forthcoming banquet, for he had heard of the turtle and plover, and expressing a playful regret that it was not the season for whale, assuring me, as was the fact, that amongst Bermudian dainties the flesh of the young mammal held a prominent place. He concluded by saying that he was content to "rough it," on what he understood was the chosen fare of the British aldermen. I showed his merry note to several of my brother-officers, and they all declared how glad they were to find that F— was coming to dine again so soon.

The barracks at St. George's stand—unless their site has been altered—on the table-land of a height that completely commands the town and harbour, at a distance from the former of little more than a quarter of a mile. Like the greater part of the buildings in Bermuda, though there are exceptions—for instance, the storekeepers' houses in St. George's-square—the barracks consist of only a ground floor, and make up in length for what they lack in height. The officers' quarters, separated from those of the men, occupy the southern extremity of the parade-ground, where the hill slightly slopes towards the harbour, and this inclination of the soil is remedied by a higher foundation, to preserve the level of the long verandah which stretches along the entire front of the building. The verandah was our great place of rendezvous, whatever the occasion; whether a ship-of-war were reported in sight, the signal espied on Telegraph-hill announcing the arrival of the mail-packet from Halifax, the fact of a whale having been seen "blowing" in the offing, or the daily advent of the dinner-hour. On the evening when F— was my expected "friend," the usual muster had taken place, all the other guests were assembled, the drummer had beaten the Roast Beef of Old England—the military dinner-bell—but there was a pause before entering the mess-room. "Are we waiting for anybody?" was the general question. The answer from more than one was, that "C—'s, friend" had not yet arrived. "Who is he?" was the next inquiry; and when the delinquent was named a considerable amount of good-humoured reviling was uttered at his expense. "Well," said the colonel, whose sobriquet was Redgauntlet, on account of his descent from the family of the hero of Walter Scott's last novel, "at the risk of cooling the turtle soup, and mulling the claret, we will give him five minutes more. The fellow is so fond of his pretty wife that he can't bear to leave her, I suppose. We must put down all the married ladies in the island!" "Better invite them, too, sir!" said a gay young ensign. "I'll tell you what," retorted the bachelor colonel, "if any officer of mine ventures to be merely civil to a lady, so long as I command the regiment, I'll bring him to a general court-martial. It is an offence provided for in my copy of the Articles of War, and the penalty is—" "Death, I suppose, colonel!" said the former speaker; "for my part, I accept my fate." "You are right, you young dog! Death by dancing, or

such other punishment as by the general court-martial shall be awarded." In light nonsense of this kind the permitted five minutes—and another five to boot—were consumed; but when it began to draw near a quarter of an hour, the impatient colonel would wait no longer. "Play the Roast Beef again," he said; "if he hears it, coming up the hill, he must run for it. Now let us go in." He beckoned to me, however, as he led the way, and observed: "Your servant is a smart light-infantry man, send him down to hurry up this laggard." John Hurley, the man the colonel spoke of, was a quick, intelligent Irishman, and I despatched him on his errand. "Never fear, sir," said he, "but I'll bring him along before the drum has done bating."

We accordingly took our places at table, and began dinner, a seat being left, like Banquo's, unfilled. It was my own simile, and little did I imagine that its application would prove literally true. But ten minutes had scarcely elapsed, before John Hurley burst into the mess-room, pale and breathless.

"Please your honour," he exclaimed, addressing me, "Mr. F—— has been kilt!"

Every one started to his feet at this abrupt announcement; a hundred questions were asked in a moment, all resolving themselves into the inquiry from the colonel: "What on earth do you mean? Are you drunk, man? Speak out!"

"It's not drunk I am, colonel! Niver a drop of liquor has passed my lips since I took my mornin', and if I were to spake as loud as a gun I could only say that Mr. F—— had been shot!"

"How? By whom?" asked a dozen voices.

"Some blaggard Moodian, bad luck to him! I don't know his name," returned Hurley.

"Has the fellow been taken?" demanded the colonel.

"Not he, sir," replied Hurley. "As soon as he did it, he was off like the shot he'd just fired, leaving Mr. F—— kilt upon the ground where he fell."

"Mr. Adjutant," said the colonel, addressing me no longer by name, but by the designation of my position in the regiment, "get a sergeant's party under arms, and send out patrols to scour the island. No ammunition, mind! The scoundrel must be taken alive!"

I quitted the mess-room hastily, leaving all in confusion behind. Merely stopping at my room for an instant to buckle on my sword, I hurried to the orderly-room, summoned the sergeant-major, and gave the colonel's order briefly, stating for what purpose the men were wanted. There was no need to claim the first for duty; a dozen volunteered at once. We took those that came, while a score or two more, in their fatigue dresses, set off like wildfire, eager for the chase. Heading the armed party, I also followed rapidly to the town. We learnt on the road that the report of Mr. F—— being killed was not absolutely true; he was, however, desperately

wounded, having been shot in the groin, and had been carried to his own house. Thither we proceeded, and found a large crowd gathered in front of it—almost the entire population of the place—restless and clamorous, as coloured people under excitement always are. I then, for the first time, heard the name of the assassin, coupled with the confirmation of Hurley's news that he had made his escape. He proved to be one Joel Tucker, the master of a small schooner, trading habitually between St. George's and Norfolk, in Virginia. What was his motive for the crime he had committed nobody could tell, as nothing was known of his having ever been on bad terms with Mr. F——. On the contrary, he had often been favoured by the latter with freights when others were desirous of having them on equal terms; and his last return voyage was a consignment to Mr. F——, who had been heard to express himself to Tucker as quite satisfied with the result of the business transacted between them. The man, however, did not stand well in anybody's estimation. Acts of cruelty to his "hands"—all coloured men and boys—were related of him, and he was held to be of a surly, revengeful disposition; but still the question arose, What cause of quarrel had he with Mr. F——?

While this information—such as it was—was being given, the victim of the assassination was lying insensible, unable to give any account of what had occurred. His brother-in-law, Dr. H——, was by his bedside, where sat his poor forlorn young wife, now just on the point of being again a mother. She had scarcely spoken beyond the first exclamation of horror and dismay; but no persuasion could induce her to leave the post she occupied, even while the surgical examination was made to ascertain the extent of the sufferer's injury. The wound, which could not be probed, was evidently a very dangerous one, and from its outward appearance, and the state of Mr. F——'s, clothes, which were much burnt, it was plain that the pistol had been fired close to his body. Internal hemorrhage was feared, and this apprehension was shared with Dr. H—— by the rest of the surgeons of the garrison, who all, as the news of the event reached them, were in attendance. It would have answered no purpose, under the circumstances, for me to have intruded into the sick-room; indeed, all but the medical men were strictly excluded; having, therefore, distributed my party with full instructions, I returned to the barracks to report what I knew to the colonel. Redgauntlet was a man of a very impetuous character, and chafed exceedingly at the imperfect information I was only able to give. He was not only the commandant of the garrison, but, in the absence of Sir H—— T——, the governor, not yet arrived from England, the civil as well as the military authority over the Bermudas was temporarily delegated to him; and being his military secretary as well as his regimental adjutant, I had plenty of work to do, though much of it was superfluous. On

this occasion, greatly moved to anger by the tragical event which had occurred while the islands were under his control, and considering himself personally responsible for the result, he dictated a number of impulsive orders, which I had to reduce to writing. This occupation detained me for several hours; but towards midnight I was released, and the first use I made of my freedom was to return to F——'s house, to ascertain his condition.

A great change had taken place. Poor F—— had recovered his consciousness, had been able to tell the story of the crime of which he was the victim, but he was a dying man, and the statement he made was a deposition which those who heard it formally attested. His words were to the following effect: "Being engaged to dine at the mess of the — Regiment, I dressed about half-past five this afternoon, and shortly afterwards went out, meaning to walk gently up to the barracks. I had got as far as the lane which turns on the left hand towards Government House, and was passing by, when I heard some one calling out to me by name to stop, and looking round, I saw a man in whom, though it was almost dusk, I at once recognised Joel Tucker. He was running fast down the lane towards me, and on his nearer approach I saw that he held a pistol in his hand, and seemed to be greatly excited. 'What is the matter, Tucker?' I asked. 'What are you doing with that pistol?' 'What I want to do with it,' he answered, 'I'll tell you.' Then he added, with an oath: 'I've been looking for your — brother-in-law. He wasn't at home, but I'll shoot him wherever I find him!' 'You must be mad, Tucker,' I said. 'What harm has he done you?' 'Mad!' he repeated; 'maybe I am; but mad or not, I'll have his blood! Harm? Harm enough to make me take his life.' Knowing the violence of the man's character, I tried to calm him. 'Come, come, Tucker,' I said, 'something has put you out, and, in your mistaken anger, you are laying the blame on my brother-in-law. Why, he's as good a friend to you as I am, or as any one in the island.' 'Mistaken,' he replied; 'no, I'm not such a fool as that. As if I didn't know who it was last week before I got home that drove my pigs out of his Indian corn, and nearly cut one of 'em in two with his cursed hoe. A pretty friend he is — and you, perhaps, are just such another.' 'Never mind me,' I said; 'let us talk about H——. Surely you don't bear malice for such a thing as that, and so long, too? He was in a passion, I dare say, and never meant to hurt the animal — only wanted to drive it away, and struck it accidentally.' 'I won't strike him accidentally,' was Tucker's reply. 'I'll blow his brains out wherever I meet him.' 'I must prevent that,' said I. 'I know you don't mean what you say; but you must give me your pistol.' 'Where is H——?' he asked. 'Tell me where the — is hiding?' 'I don't know,' I replied; 'and,' I added, 'I certainly would not tell you if I did.' 'You wouldn't!' exclaimed Tucker, coming close up to me. 'No, I would

not,' I answered firmly. 'Then take that!' he cried; and standing about a yard off, levelled his weapon and fired. I remember nothing more."

Life was ebbing fast when I was admitted to F——'s room. He was still lying where he had originally been placed, and, as the surgeons supposed, was sinking from internal bleeding. He had, however, recollection enough left to know me, and strength enough to press my hand and say "Good-by." A few minutes after, all was over on earth with one of the kindest men that ever breathed. It was a sad night for that house, and for all who knew the fate that had befallen its owner. Mrs. F——, seized with violent convulsions, was removed to her own room, which she did not leave for some months, her form wasted, her health shattered, with only her two orphans to comfort her, the child being still-born, of which she was confined a few hours after her husband's death. A single night had wrought all this woe—a single night, and no cause for the murder, that made it woful! The man who felt the blow most was, naturally, Dr. H——; he showed its effect in the care he took of poor F——'s widow, to whom he became more than a brother.

For all reasons, for justice' sake, for that of friendship, pity, and, it must be owned, the desire of vengeance, no exertion was spared by any of us in the endeavour to apprehend the murderer. There was no necessity for the circulation of hand-bills, the tragedy being in everybody's mouth from one end of the island to the other, but a notice, offering a large reward, and fully describing the person of Joel Tucker, for the information of those to whom it was not known, appeared in the Bermuda Gazette—but neither this notification, nor the unsuccessful search, were productive of any immediate result. Every morning, for six successive days, rumours were spread that Tucker had been taken; the long verandah was the scene of perpetual consultation, where, when the reports were found to be groundless, devices were suggested for effecting the murderer's capture. At last, information came on which, we thought, reliance might be placed. It was stated by a mulatto, named Isaac Forbes, a fisherman who lived in a lonely cottage on that part of the "main"—as the largest island is called, which partly enriches King's Harbour, the waters we crossed on the evening of our arrival in Bermuda—that returning home late at night he had seen a figure stealing through a thicket in the neighbourhood of the Admiral's Cave, whom he thoroughly believed was Joel Tucker. He had reason enough for knowing him, having once sailed in his vessel, and suffered severely from the cruelty with which Tucker was in the habit of treating his crew.

Amongst the natural curiosities of Bermuda, the most remarkable are the numerous caves which undermine the islands in so many places. Many of them penetrate to great distances, and all are of extraordinary beauty; the profusion,

size, and wondrous forms of the stalactites far exceeding what is generally met with elsewhere. Of these, the one just mentioned is the finest; and, as it branches off into various unexplored cavities, no better place of concealment can well be imagined. The probability, therefore, was greatly in favour of the supposition that Tucker had taken refuge in the Admiral's Cave, though how he had managed to subsist for so many days was a question not easy to answer. It may be asked why so obvious a place of refuge was not thought of in the first instance; but it arose from the fact that when the troops were sent out in search of him, on the night of the murder, the party which proceeded to the extremity of St. George's Island, which is separated from the "main" by a deep and rapid channel of the sea, were assured by the ferry-master that no one had crossed that evening; and ever since a guard had been posted there, whose duty it was to examine every one who attempted to pass that way. Yet, if the assertion of Forbes could be relied on, the murderer had contrived to escape observation, and place himself in comparative safety. To search the great cave was therefore resolved on. About twenty of the most active of our men were told off for the duty, and, accompanied by a constable, armed with a warrant for the murderer's apprehension, and, guided by Forbes, who knew the interior of the cabin better than most people, it being the place where he procured fresh water for all his domestic purposes, the party immediately set forth. I was of the number, together with other officers. A government boat was ordered for the service, in which we sailed for Walsingham—the name of the locality where Forbes dwelt. As it was believed, though not positively known, that there was more than one issue from the cave, the greater part of the men were dispersed by files throughout the wood at some distance around, with orders to close in at the sound of the bugle, and with the rest we proceeded on our search. Making our way through a closethicket of sage-bush and low dwarf cedar, we struck into a narrow, circuitous, and scarcely perceptible path, which led to the principal and only known entrance to the place where we hoped to find the murderer. The approach to the cave was not easy of access, its mouth being almost entirely hidden by coffee and pomgranate shrubs, and parasite plants of various kinds, the passion-flower and Virginian creeper being the most luxuriant. Orange and lemon trees laden with fruit were also scattered about, making the spot resemble a rich yet neglected garden; but its beauty had no charms for us at that moment, however much we might have been inclined to linger and admire it at another. Forcing aside the pendent leaves of a broad banana, Forbes pointed to the entrance of the cave, and, picking his way amongst the rocky fragments, began the descent, whispering to us to follow closely. It was no easy matter to do so, the footing being very slippery and unsafe, owing to the constant percolation of rain-water through the porous soil, which dripped from the

long stalactites that hung from the caverned roof. There was light, however, from the outer air for the first few yards of the rugged slope, and we reached a level space without accident. It was necessary now to proceed with greater care, a dark abyss, which appeared unfathomable, yawning before us. To enforce caution, our guide displaced a heavy stone, which, after a few bounds, plunged with an echoing roar into deep water beneath. Torches were lit here, and once more we advanced. I might dwell on the subterranean wonders that met us at every step of our progress, but those were less heeded than the object which brought us to the place. For nearly half an hour we moved on, constantly descending till we reached the margin of the water, which was salt, from its communication with the sea. It proved a sort of gulf, and rose and fell with the tide.

As yet, no sign or sound had betrayed the presence of any one but ourselves; and having to all appearance reached the utmost limits of the cave, we began to question the utility of hunting further, when my servant, John Hurley, who had been allowed to join the party, and who, in his eagerness, had got considerably ahead, shouted out at the top of his voice: "I have him! Come on, boys! Here he is! Give up, you scoundrel!" We raised our torches, and, looking in the direction from which the voice proceeded, descried Hurley on his knees grappling with what appeared to be the crouching figure of a man. But this vision was only vouchsafed for a moment. The next thing we saw was my unlucky servant rolling down the steep, and immediately afterwards a tremendous splash announced the fact of his having tumbled into the water. We fished him out, dripping wet, and spluttering. "I thought I got him," he said, "but just as I laid a hold, my foot slipped. He's up there still! It's mighty cowl'd he is!" Both these remarks were true, for when our guide climbed to the place from which Hurley had fallen, he discovered that what we had taken for the fugitive was nothing but a large stalagmite, closely resembling a human being. When our laughter at the mistake had subsided, we asked if we could get any further in that direction, and being assured that there was no practicable path, we gave up the search, and re-trod the windings of the rock till we reached the light of day, coming to the conclusion that if the murderer had made any use of the cave, it was only for a temporary purpose—probably when he believed that pursuers were on his track. Reluctantly, therefore, after scouring the neighbouring woods, and extending our examination for some distance, the men were called in, and we returned disappointed to the garrison.

Whether stimulated by the offered reward, or moved by the desire to avenge his own wrongs, or piqued at the doubts thrown on his statement—if a combination of all these motives did not operate with him, Isaac Forbes was determined to renew the search for Joel Tucker, and instead of going out to fish that evening, re-

mained in his cottage till dark. He then—this was his subsequent statement—went quietly forth, and, climbing a large calabash-tree, sat watching among its branches, a notion having entered his brain that Tucker haunted the spot. For some hours all was perfectly still, the mocking-bird had long ceased his imitative song, and the waning moon had just risen, when, by her uncertain light, the watcher discerned the figure of a man emerging from a thicket at a short distance. He carried a bundle in one hand, and making his way in a southerly direction, passed close to the calabash-tree. Had there been no light at all, the intensity of the mulatto's gaze would have sufficed to distinguish, in the person who approached, the man he was looking for. It was no other than Joel Tucker. The idea of his true place of concealment then flashed upon Forbes. On the south side of the "main," to seaward of a long spit of land where the breakers terminated, extended a broad reach of sweeping sand, which, constantly encroaching, had added to the ruin of a small village originally half destroyed by fire and abandoned by its inhabitants. Singularly enough, the name of the place was Tucker's-town, but only a few blackened walls remained, sufficient, however, to afford shelter for any one desirous of concealment, with an ulterior purpose in view. Forbes guessed at this purpose, and what subsequently happened confirmed his opinion. Noiselessly leaving the tree, and treading like Caliban, so that the blind mole could not hear his foot fall, he followed whither Tucker was evidently bound. He tracked him to the deserted village; and saw him enter the ruins. Here, then, he housed himself; but it was not enough for Forbes to know this. There was something else he wanted to ascertain, and he waited till daybreak for the purpose. When the first gleams of the morning light appeared, he moved from the under-wood of sage-bush in which he had been lying, and climbed a hill that commanded the whole line of coast. His keen eyes eagerly swept the horizon, but not a single sail was visible, and he felt satisfied that no vessel could appear in sight for several hours at least. From the height where he stood the ruined village was plainly visible, and looking towards it, he saw Joel Tucker steal out a few paces and stand with his back to the shore, one hand shading his eyes, as if he were on the look-out for some passing vessel.

He had evidently selected this spot as affording him the best chance of making his escape from the islands. After gazing for about ten minutes, the murderer slowly returned to his hiding-place, and, having learnt all he wished to know, Forbes hurried to Walsingham, got into his boat and made the best of his way to St. George's, to communicate the certain intelligence he possessed of the whereabouts of Joel Tucker. The matter was now in the hands of the local magistrate, who, employing the civil force only, manned a larger boat than the fishermen's, and sent Forbes back in it to guide the

party. Three or four hours had gone by since the mulatto left Tucker's-town, and in the interim the restless murderer had taken his resolution. It appeared, from the subsequent depositions, that, on the night the murder was committed, Tucker took possession of a small boat which he found on the shore, belonging to the proprietor of an arrowroot plantation about a mile from St. George's, and rowed across to the "main," avoiding the ferry. This accounted for the fact of his not having been seen there. The stolen boat, which was not missed, as it was very rarely used, Tucker concealed in a mangrove creek on the inner side of the spit of land already mentioned, and managed to subsist by means of nocturnal depredations. This mode of living was fraught, however, with so much peril, and his personal anxiety to escape was so great, that he came at last to the resolve of putting out to sea in the hope of being picked up, when he should be able to tell his own story, and accomplish his deliverance; and, but for the discovery made by the mulatto, such a result might not have been improbable.

Full of the expectation of making an immediate capture, the officers of justice landed close to the mangrove creek, and, led by Forbes, crossed over the spit of land to Tucker's-town, and, having surrounded the ruins, closed in upon them, to take the hare in its form. Amongst the broken walls, over which the prickly cactus was fast spreading, there stood the larger part of a cottage, roofless, but affording something like accommodation, the fireplace and chimney still remaining. Here, then, the fugitive was doubtless hidden. The party crept round the cottage and made a rush inside. There was nobody there—but evidence of recent occupation was plainly apparent. The embers of a fire of cedar-branches were still warm, and some fragments of food—peelings of the sweet potato, the vegetable on which Tucker had chiefly lived—were strewn on the ground, but the man himself was gone. As quickly as he entered the hut the mulatto rushed out again, and presently the others heard him utter a quick cry. They ran to where he stood gesticulating and shouting, and looking to seaward, saw at the distance of full a mile from the shore a man pulling away from it with all his might, and handling his oars like one well accustomed to their use.

"By golly, him gone!" exclaimed Forbes; "but we catch him yet!"

It was no time for standing idle if they meant to do so; and without more delay the party ran back to the mangrove creek, got into their boat, and bending to their work, rowed round the spit. Half mad with excitement, the mulatto, who feared alike the loss of the reward and the escape of his persecutor, stood up in the bows the better to direct the pursuit. Half an hour had been gained by the fugitive, who had increased his distance from the shore by nearly a couple of miles. It was a hard task for the pursuers to overtake an experienced

boatman with so great a start; but they had almost as strong a motive in their endeavour to do so, as he whom they followed had in preventing them, and the effort on both sides was increased by a fact which the mulatto as well as the murderer became aware of—a ship was in the offing, sailing on a wind, and evidently only passing the islands.

"Pull away, *my men!*" cried Forbes, as if he were the captain of a man-of-war. "This dam rascal get away if you don't. I see the colours of the ship! By golly, the stars and stripes! Once he get aboard that dam Yankee clipper we never see him no more. Get along, you lazy lubbers—pull! pull!"

If the race had been swift before it was doubly rapid now, but superior power began to tell, and the pursuing boat drew fast upon the other. Seven days of half-starvation had greatly reduced the murderer's strength, while they who followed were in the full plenitude of health and vigour. Though Tucker, who saw his danger as well as his means of escape, exerted every muscle, he was yet half a mile from the clipper when the officers' boat was within a quarter of a mile of his own. Once more he made a desperate effort, but the space between the rivals gradually diminished, till only two boats' lengths remained between them, and little more than a hundred yards divided the murderer from the clipper, on the deck of which the crew were gathered to witness the race. The mulatto became as pale as if he had been born of white parents, and shouted with frantic energy; the boats nearly touched. "Give way! I jump into him," cried Forbes. He was on the point of doing so, when Tucker rose from his seat, and, quick as thought, fired a pistol at the mulatto—a second which he had reserved for self-defence. Owing to the unsteadiness of his aim the ball whistled harmlessly, close to the head of the mulatto. Throwing away the weapon, and calling out "Save me!" the murderer leaped into the sea, and swam towards the clipper. But the mulatto was in the waves as soon as himself, and, with the swiftness of the shark, in three strokes was abreast of his prey, and seized him by the neck. The murderer grappled him, and in the struggle they both disappeared, only, however, to rise again a few moments afterwards, with Tucker senseless and stretched across the mulatto's broad breast, while his captor, lying on his back, and showing his white teeth, grin-

ning with delight, swam to meet the officers' boat.

"What has that fellow done?" shouted the captain of the clipper through his speaking-trumpet.

"Committed murder," was the reply.

"Lynch him, then!" rejoined the Yankee; and easing his vessel off a few points, he waved his hand in token of farewell. The salute was returned, but the American's advice was not observed. Tucker revived to learn that a more legitimate fate awaited him.

I need not dwell on this part of the story. The murderer was tried at Hamilton, the chief town in Bermuda, and sentenced to be hung on the spot where his crime was committed. It was my duty to superintend the military arrangements for preserving order when the sentence was carried out. Capital punishment was a thing almost unknown in the Bermudas—at least since the days of the pirates—but there was no difficulty in finding a hangman. So much was poor F— beloved by the coloured people, and so strong was the feeling against his murderer amongst them, that the officer was volunteered; but to preserve a kind of decency, while a fantastic notion was gratified, the hangman wore a mask, a slop dress, and a cocked-hat and feathers.

This was the first execution I ever witnessed. It was also the last.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I. EASTPORT.

A FEW cottages—scattered like odd grains of corn along a short strip of English coast—after a rickety and precarious infancy, had grown into a village. With such good nutriment as fishing and smuggling, it became a strong child. Later, in the war times, it was fancied by the military authorities: a fort and large barracks were built, and soldiers sent there. From that moment it became respectable, ceased to be a city Arab, and was called Eastport. In a short time it had timidly advanced to the grade of watering-place—a shy debutante—raised from the ranks, and apparently as ill at ease in its new finery of dotted villas and dampish plaster terraces, as the sergeant who has been made uncomfortable by a Commission. But, in ten years more its patent would be regularly made out; and it would be enrolled permanently among the dignified watering-places. The threads of railway would converge, and be gathered up there, as into a hand. Beading after beading of snow-white terraces would embroider the edges of the cliffs. A monster hotel, as white and bright as if it were every morning burnished by mammoth housemaids, and teeming with life like a monster warren, would have burst out on the hill, and noble persons have poured in, and have been cramped in tight drawing-rooms, scented with new plaster, at twenty guineas a week. A glistening strand reclaimed from savagery and ugly boulders, would have burst into gay files of sentry-boxes on wheels, travelling out in the sun to the deeper waters, and have become an animated encampment, where the splash and the plunge marked time, and where countless novels and newspapers would be read to the pleasant music of children's prattle and young ladies' voices.

But the moment had not yet come. The fairy queen of fashion, always fanciful and arbitrary, had not yet let her robe fall upon this corner, nor had she touched it with her golden wand. She had not given the signal for the rush. So it lay now in a state of comparative squalor, enjoying a sort of vegetable life—just as its half-dozen stranded fishing-boats lay over on their bulging sides in a helpless and sluggish imbecility. A little pig straggled out awkwardly and timor-

ously to sea: but by-and-by there would be a vote in Parliament, and a new harbour, and fast sailing-packets shooting across with Mails to the Dutch and Belgian coasts opposite.

On the lowest tier, next the shore, were the fishermen's huts. A couple of sloping roads ran up the cliffs like ribbons, and became streets, and on the top the bits of terraces and strips of villas broke out in very spasmodic and disorderly fashion. These were in such white patches, with such sudden gaps—where an ambitious speculator who had gone in for an entire terrace and had been compelled to stop short ingloriously at Number Three—that the whole cliff, taken together, seemed like one gigantic jaw smiling at the sky, with teeth knocked out here and there. The barracks and fort were far away to the right, on a cliff that looked as soft and crumbly and friable as a crag of ripe old dinner-cheese.

In this way the settlement gradually retreated inland, and the sea colony was linked by a chain of houses straggling like videttes towards a genuine country town about a mile away. The country town was proud of its watering-place, and lived and had its being by two artificial stimulants—one the presence of soldiery in a sort of fort (a foot regiment and some artillerymen), whose officers were precious to the neighbourhood; the other a steeple-chase of some mark, which annually brought down a strange miscellany, who, for a couple of nights swarmed over the little town, and utilised even its haylofts. The whole district was cheap. As yet life was to be enjoyed there with economy, and it was therefore in esteem with many genteel families whose means were not on the same high level as their gentility. Life, too, was strongly savoured by the presence of the officers, who became the llamas of the territory. They were the salt of that special earth, and the leaven of every social meeting for miles about. With some they were as the air we breathe, and by such were inhaled in deep draughts. The warm tint of their dress became necessary to the landscape, as an agreeable patch of colour, and lit it up as the late Mr. Turner did a dull sea-piece—with a vermilion buoy.

In these barracks one night Captain Farmor and a friend, who was called "Young Brett," were sitting at the fire. The feast was done, and those who had feasted were scattered.

"Young Brett" was a new ensign, white-haired to a strange degree, and half a child in appearance, but he was full of respect and admiration for men of experience, like the Mentor beside him. The Mentor beside him had his legs upon a chair, his shell-jacket open, and on his lips was a steady air of composed indifference and almost habitual disgust.

The fledgeling ensign's enthusiasm was not yet chilled. He was describing a hunt.

"Then went through the Old Field," he said, "up to the brook which runs into the mill-race, where there is such a stiff jump—and such a fall! You never saw such a business, every second fellow down."

"They don't know how to ride," said Captain Fermor, tranquilly. "All tailors, every man of 'em."

"I went over with the rest," said the white boy, a little ruefully, "with such a ducking! Some one pulled me out. That beast I rode pulled so."

"Some way it always is the beast we ride," said the other, with the same inert smile. "It's not a country for a gentleman to hunt over. I had to give it up myself. You know I've seen the proper sort of thing. Who were out? the usual set?"

"The usual lot; and that Hanbury, as usual, leading. He got over the brook. But then he rides such horses!"

The right side of the other's lip went up a little at this speech, and he raised himself in his chair.

"Of course he did! These country fellows can scramble over every drain in the place. I have broken a horse's back before now over a little furrow. Any fool can make a show on a great strong brute that knows every stone and hedge in the place. I don't care to lay mind to studying their topography. If I chose, I suppose I could do it with the best of 'em. But it wouldn't repay me the trouble."

Captain Fermor had an eye-glass which he used occasionally, being a little near-sighted; but he had another moral bit of crystal, through which he unconsciously viewed his own personal nature. It was a sort of polite and social Pantheism. He really fancied that his "*το εγω*," as the Germans put it, pervaded all things, and that everything that was said or done, in which he was called on to speak or do, must have necessary reference to him.

"But he rode like a man," said the white-haired youth, with a thoughtful admiration; "all through, the same—never thrown out a moment. I wonder what he gave for that horse? Two two nought?"

"Bred him, you may be sure—bred him to sell. That's his line. It's the way with all these low farmer fellows."

"But you recollect the parson said the other day he was of good family—Sir Thomas Hanbury—or Somebody like that."

"That don't make him a good huntsman," said Captain Fermor; then added, with a characteristic want of logic, "it's nothing to me

who he is or what he is—I don't care, I'm sure."

The white ensign, still following his hero with a smile of admiration as he flew over a jump, went on the same key of panegyric. "And then coming home dead beat, would you believe it? I saw his horse at the gate of that terrace where those girls live—Raglan-terrace—and he himself with them in the window, as fresh as if he were out of his bath."

Captain Fermor gave a sort of short contemptuous snort or sniff, and his fawn-coloured moustache, which hung over his mouth like the eaves of a thatched cottage, went up again. But he said nothing.

"They say he's going to be married to one of them," said the ensign; "the younger one, so the doctor told me to-day. But don't say I said it, because it may be only a bit of gossip."

The way in which Captain Fermor opened his aluminium-looking eyes on the youth, was something to see. "Why should I?" he said. "Whom should I tell? I suppose I shall have forgotten it in ten minutes. What on earth, my good child, can you suppose these people and their stories are to me? It is very well for you, who have seen no life as yet. You may be quite easy in your mind, and tell your apothecary or parson—whose names, thank God, I don't know—that their secret is quite safe with me—because quite forgotten."

The boy coloured up, and became pink at his forehead, contrasting oddly with his white hair. Captain Fermor, really pleased with himself with having spoken with such success and such an under-current of quiet sarcasm, became of a sudden quite free and good humoured. He took out his pipe and his tobacco-pouch, and began, with an agreeable leisureness, to fill it.

"And so you saw these girls? They are pretty," he said, making that allowance.

"Yes, yes!" said the other, eagerly; "there's one very handsome. I wish—I wish," he added, "I knew her. But they won't know people."

"I could have known them fifty times over if I wanted," said Captain Fermor, trying whether his pipe drew freely. "There were people plaguing me a dozen times. But I don't care for that sort of thing. It's not my line, you see. Made it a rule not to make new acquaintances more than I can manage. People say to me, I wish you would let us introduce you to the—the—what do you call them?"

"Manuels! Manuels!" said the youth.

"But I don't want to. I don't care. There are fellows who want to know all the world. I'm not one of that sort."

"O!" said the young ensign, with an unconscious piteousness. "If I could only manage it! They are so handsome; and if I could get to know them!"

"Out of the question, my good fellow," said Captain Fermor, becoming cold again. "I never do that sort of thing, unless for friends, you know. Besides, take my advice; don't trouble

your head about that direction. I fancy you would scarcely be the description of article for them, you see."

In many of those people in whom personality, or this organic egotism is strong, a sort of cruel truth breaks out, almost "brutal," as the French put it. But it is only a logical development, and really almost unconscious. From it the white-haired ensign suffered. And there was silence in consequence for a few moments. Captain Fermor, with his pipe now fairly alight, was still thinking how placidly he could turn a bit of quiet, gentlemanly sarcasm. A tranquil smile was mantling about the tube of his pipe, and broke the blue clouds, like a little human sun.

"I suppose," he said, after a time, and taking his pipe out to look at it narrowly—"I suppose that strong-built brute will be entered for the steeple-chase?"

"Yes," said the youth shortly, and there was a wounded modulation in the key. But the captain, wrapped up in his egotistic cloak, had now travelled miles from any results his speech might have produced.

"And I suppose," added the captain, "that fellow Hanbury—Hanbury—will ride him?"

"Yes," said the youth, a little more heartily, and trying to forget his hurt, for his soul was in horses. "O, he'll ride! They'll be very good this year. I shall ride."

The captain smiled. Here was another opportunity for stropping his satirical blade.

"Of course they will be good, *because* you ride, eh? You'll draw the whole country. Don't you see what you lay yourself open to by that loose form of speech? I call your attention as a friend. Of course it's no affair of mine."

"Yes, I see! But they are to be first rate. I have entered Kathleen, and Taylor has entered Malakoff. I am in already for the Welter—all gentlemen riders, you know."

Again the captain began to whet his razor. "Then they must let no natives enter. Good gracious! what a lot of cads will start." And again he smiled to himself. It was good practice turning this raw child to profit.

"Brian is to start!" said Young Brett, still on the horses. "And Brent will ride him himself."

"Ah! that is a horse," said Captain Fermor, taking his pipe out of his mouth with real interest. "How he will cut up the local fellows! And a man that can ride. He'll give them a lesson." Here Captain Fermor took a weary stretch, as if life under this accumulation of monotony was indeed a burden.

And yet, taking the average of his days, and the duties with which he filled in his days, he seemed to enter into its current with something far short of indifference. The truth was, this was only the fruit of his extravagant egotism. For him the genuine race of the world was the race that wore uniforms; that is to say, the men whose uniform was scarlet. Other soldiers of other countries were mere impostors, theatrical fellows

with gaudy coats. It was notorious there was but one real "service" known, which was the British. Thus, the bulk of English mankind who did not bear commissions were cagots, and the onus of respectability lay upon them. Again, as with men so with things. Town was the centre, the city of true metal. Town things, bought in Town shops—bought, too, at the places where "our fellows" were accustomed to buy—the true Procrustean gauge to which all things must be stretched or fitted—this was more of our captain's creed. Yet he was a gentlemanly devotee, and did not rant these tenets; but they were so kneaded into his constitution, air, and deportment, that everything he said, and everything he did, seemed to whisper an article of this faith.

CHAPTER II. THE MANUELS.

IN the window of that miniature house in Raglan-terrace, where Young Brett had seen the admired horse standing, were the ladies of the Manuel family. The house was number four, in a terrace which started magnificently, intending a swoop of at least a street long, but had halted at number four, through a sudden spasm. In the window was Mrs. Manuel, a short handsome olive-toned elderly lady, whose hair was iron-grey, and whose eyes travelled sharply from east to west, and back again. There was also Violet, her second daughter; and Pauline, her eldest, now flashing out in the sunlight, was framed in the window. There admiring Young Brett saw her, in a window to herself, looking out at the noble horse, and fallen into a true statuesque attitude—into which she fell unconsciously some dozen times in the day.

Young Brett looked wistfully, and languished to know her. But for him, and for such as him, number four was as a convent of the very strictest order. The second daughter, whom they called Violet, was not dark, but round and full, with a strange bright glistening in her eyes, which were large and "fine." About her altogether there was a sense of rich colour, with a sort of devotional air.

The hall door was open as Young Brett passed, and coming out with Hanbury, to feel that great horse all over, with that wonder and respect which foreigners have for great English horses, was a son of the house, with black glossy hair that shone and curled—with a faint olive tint about the cheeks, square heavy eyebrows, bluish shading on cheeks and upper lip, where moustache would later ripen and flourish, and a thoughtful business air beyond his years.

He felt and patted the stout strong horse all over. Then Hanbury, an over-healthy, pink-cheeked, open-faced man of the country, mounted into his saddle with some pride, for he knew that eyes were upon him, and took off his hat to the windows, with an emphasis towards that on the left, where the full-eyed girl was with her mother. Then made his horse amble and plunge gently,

yet with grace, for some purpose of his own, struggling with him in a sham of contest, and finally, as it were, letting him have his way, and plunge off in a dignified canter. All this Young Brett saw, as he had seen many such kindred scenes, with a sort of aching. He pined with a boyish pining for ladies' company, and longed to play at drawing-room knighthood and social jousts.

Manuel—the gossips told each other—had been a quasi-Anglo-Spanish merchant, who had lived years at Cadiz, and had married a Spanish woman. Wine was his divinity, and in that faith he had lived and died, sending home butts and casks every week. To the figures that flitted round in the little watering-place, this meagre detail had travelled, and, meagre as it was, no one knew how it had been found out. Still, it was welcome as far as it went. And one more skilful discoverer than the rest was able to point to some cloud or mystery, which hung between them and Mr. Manuel's end. For it was ascertained that the butts and casks had broken up suddenly, and in that deluge, the merchant had disappeared. In short, there was a story and mystery, or there should be a story and mystery, which, being unresolved, caused much torture and suffering in the neighbourhood. Public interest in their regard was the more inflamed by the jealous reserve they maintained in their plaster-covered little castle on Raglan-terrace. The whole colony struggled to know them, men made violent efforts to pour in and carry an acquaintance by assault, but ineffectually. Only Mr. John Hanbury, who rode the admired horse, had found some breach through which he had stolen in.

It seemed natural enough to those who knew him well; for he was penetrated through and through with a blunt gentleness and simplicity which, of all characters in daily currency, is the most acceptable, and even superficially makes the most way. The plated artificial world likes this sort of nature, and inhales it as it does a sea breeze at Brighton. He had been in India in some civil station, had broken down physically, and had come home, thirty-eight years old, with six feet of height, broad shoulders, a square, rather massive face, a large kindly eye, black glossy hair, and a black moustache as glossy. He delighted in sport, had some dozen guns or so with which he had shot the tiger and the elephant, and respected the character of a brave and upright horse pretty much as he did that of an upright Christian. He spoke with an earnestness verging upon dignity, and for him the buffoonery argot, called chaff, nursery language of wittlings, was hopelessly unintelligible.

The admired horse Baron ambled up to Raglan-terrace very often, nearly every day. Its rider and owner came yet more often. The dust-men and dust-women of gossip, who went about with baskets on their shoulders and a hook, picking up old torn shreds and scraps and tossing them into their baskets, met the party often on the roads and cliffs. It was given out officially,

as it were, that a marriage must follow; and the eagerness for original details as to the Manuels' history became almost exquisite. Any damaging scraps of whisper about their early days would be most precious now.

Captain Fermor, who spent a great deal of his day in a miserable listlessness, lounging along the roads, but most of all sitting on a low wall by the roadside in the sun, busy with a blunt stunted meerschau, and swinging his legs like pendulums—like a polite Crusoe cast adrift on this savage district—strange to say, took a greater interest in these ladies than he had acknowledged to his friend Young Brett. He had got to be fond of his wall, and swung his feet pretty much about the same hour each day. He had come to know the sisters thoroughly, their walk even half a mile away, their favourite bonnets, their clothes. He really admired "that second girl," and the sleepy dreamy languor of her eyes, and he half indulged himself in a speculation how, with proper dressing and training, under good masters of fashion, "that girl" might "do" up in Town. But he soon checked himself, almost with a blush, for this heresy—as if anything good *could* come out of barren provincialism.

The two girls tripping past—and they stepped together as sisters do, with the harmony of well-trained ponies—soon came to know the fair officer who swung his limbs upon the wall, quite as well as he knew them. At first they did not know his name, but thus someway reached them in time. There are plenty of such surface intimacies. As they walked past they dropped their eyes with a modest precision, but there was a forced composure about their faces that looked like consciousness. Captain Fermor suspended the pendulum motion, and looked long after them with tranquil approval.

By-and-by when Mr. Hanbury walked by with them very often, this expression changed. Man does not relish familiarity in man, with any of the other sex. It seems a sort of preference after rivalry; and though this view is really absurd, and based upon a fiction, it operates very largely. So at first Captain Fermor's lip used to curl contemptuously, as who should say, "A fellow like that!" Then he grew more hostile, and as one day, Hanbury full of smiles, was stooping well across the sisters, as he walked, in his eagerness in what he told, and as they listened with smiles and an interest that showed clearly they had taken no note of the captain upon his wall, the latter broke out almost loudly with "A low cad of a fellow!" Though why cad, and why low, there was no reason for pronouncing. Nay, he took this prejudice actually away with him from his wall; and when some one was criticising (a little unfairly) the riding of Mr. Hanbury, Captain Fermor joined in with a light growl, and repeated his censure that he was "a cad of a fellow!" So, as there are surface intimacies among people who are never to know each others' minds, so are there these surface animosities.

What irritated the captain specially was the

unconscious way in which the almost gentle blue eye of his enemy used to settle on him—if anything, with a kindly leaning towards him. This the other resented: and felt his lip curling up with contempt.

But the summit of unreasonable exasperation was reached, when Mr. Hanbury was seen riding by with the two young ladies. Captain Fermor almost raged against this outrage on decorum. "In Town," he said, "or, indeed, in any civilised place, it would be screamed at. Two girls going out with a fellow like that; no chaperon. It was a pity," he added, with compassion, "they had no friend to hint to them what was proper. Any fellow, that at all approached a gentleman, would not allow them to compromise themselves like that." And when the marriage rumour reached him, his scorn and amazement could not be contained.

There were other characters on these little provincial boards, invariably to be found on such occasions: types kept in stock, who will drop in presently. Such were doctor and doctor's wife; clergyman and wife; local solicitor in large business, often flying up to London; and the lauded gentry, whose nearest representative was Sir Charles Longman, of Longwood. These threads of different colours crossed and recrossed each other, and became plaited together into a sort of dull monotonous strand, which was Life at Eastport. Life, in fact, oozed on here pleasantly for some—tranquilly at least for all. Periodically Sir Charles Longman broke into a spasm of a dinner out at Longwood, and had an artillery officer, and an infantry officer with the parson and the doctor, and a solemn and impressive ceremonial ensued; when Sir Charles Longman, tall and well creased in his skin, and shining as though he had got into a suit of serpent's skin, peered at every one through a very glistening eye-glass, as though he were afraid of mistaking them. His voice came out so aridly, it seemed to have newly arrived from the Desert, and dried up all within the area of its influence like a hot wind. The soldiers went home loudly execrating host and entertainment, but Captain Fermor relished both with a smile of superiority, and said it was refreshing to meet a gentleman after all.

CHAPTER III. A MESS DINNER.

THE barracks, which were the vital organs of the place, and the very centre of its nervous system, were austere and sour looking. Buildings constructed as if for the reformation of the hardened soldiery who resided in them. Like the men themselves, they seemed to fall into line, to deploy into galleries, windows, doors, chill-looking iron-bedsteads, arches, whitewashed passages, and numbered cell boxes. As there was properly no flesh and blood in the place to be taken cognisance of officially by the authorities, but merely letters and numbers, so the same system was reasonably extended to the bedsteads, passages, arches, and even dead walls.

The barracks were on a hill commanding the town, which had been fashioned irresolutely into a sort of fort; and when the sun was shining, little lengths of scarlet ribbon were seen to unwind themselves on the walls, like a cheerful edging to a dull grey surtout, attended also by lively drumming, and the winding of trumpets. In this sort of clumsily disguised reformatory, the soldiers took their punishment, were drilled, snapped at with words of command, and, above all, "inspected."

Which dreadful operation was now just being performed. It was a dépôt, and samples of several regiments were here herded together for training and exercise. Major-General Shortall had been down, a gaunt, red-cheeked man, with what used to be termed the mutton-chop whisker, and who was determined to do his all to save the service from the destruction to which it was hurrying—by keeping his upper lip clean and bare. The men had been scrubbed, pipeclayed, French polished, burnished, holy-stoned even; had been reviled and sworn into perfect cleanliness, before General Shortall was taken down the ranks.

With a scowl of distrust, as though each private was busy hiding some breakage or stain, and might, after all, skilfully evade detection of his crime, the general walked down by a row of chests and faces, pried into buttons, twitched open cartouche-boxes, and pulled at straps sourly, then walked up past a row of backs, poked, probed as if he were making a surgical examination, and finished off a line with an air of disappointment. Colonels and captains walked with him in agitation.

In the evening, General Shortall was to dine with the mess; so, also, was Sir Charles Longman, the generic territorial person of quality, and one or two gentlemen. It was a sort of little festival. The general, in a grudging sort of fashion, had allowed some commendation to be wrung from him, in which the words "efficient" and "soldier-like" were distinguishable. So there was a weight of care off the minds of the superior officers.

Like two kings at a conference, Sir Charles Longman and General Shortall met on the rug, as at a free town. Colonel Benbow presented them to each other. The general said he had known a Longman in "my old regiment" in Jamaica, and Sir Charles, promptly fixing his glass in position, and painfully investigating the general all over, said, doubtfully, "that he—er—didn't know." They went in to dinner then, in a sort of clanking procession.

Such splendour as the dépôt could compass was put forward. Two silver soldiers, back to back, in full marching order, with knapsack and straps all complete, with the minutest buckle, exquisitely modelled, had been presented by Colonel Bolstock, C.B., to his regiment on leaving; and the two silver soldiers, leaning on their firelocks, mounted guard at the head of the table, under the general's eye. The study of the

accoutrements, as here reproduced, was an inexhaustible source of delight to the officers. It never palled, and it was customary to refer to it as a standard for other works of Art. But the general had the silver soldiers under inspection, and pronounced, sharply, that the belt of "that fellow on the right" might have tightened by another "hole," which critical bon-mot soon trickled down the whole table, and was greatly admired.

As they were sitting down, Captain Fermor came in hurriedly, and found there was but one little gap near the bottom of the table, into which he dropped. One flank of the gap was red, the other black, and just as he sat down, and waiter hands had pushed in his chair from behind, he found that the black civilian patch resolved itself into "that cad of a fellow," Hanbury!

The mere contagion of the thing was not so much; for once, he could have put up with this sort of society. But the awkwardness was here: "this fellow" was sure "to fasten" an acquaintance on him, "what, positively," as he declared afterwards, "he had been struggling with all his power to fence off," but which *he knew* all the time—he had a presentiment, in fact—would come about.

Honest John Hanbury's face actually lit up when he saw who was his companion. He was delighted, for he was of the line of Uncle Toby.

"Captain Fermor," he said, at once, "we ought to know each other. It is so droll meeting and passing each other in that sort of way—and knowing each other all the time. I am so glad, in short."

The captain's lip went up. "O, I see. Indeed!"

The other assumed that there was corresponding joy at this pleasant dinner consanguinity. "Yes," he went on, "the very thing I was wishing for, and all brought about so naturally—without trouble. Do you know, fifty times I have been on the point of walking up to you and saying, 'Captain Fermor, let me introduce myself.' I should have surprised you, I dare say."

The captain's eyes first settled on Mr. Hanbury's drop chain, then travelled up slowly to his face. "I must say you would," he said; "excuse me for telling you so frankly;" and Captain Fermor grew a shade less ill humoured as he thought how gentlemanly sarcastic he could be at times. (This was where he was so much above "our fellows," who put anything offensive all in the rough and in brute shape.)

Though he had stepped into a social ice-pail, Hanbury did not begin to feel the freezing as yet. "We are always talking of you. I should not betray secrets, but we are. We know you perfectly, meeting you so constantly—on that wall. Ha! ha!"

"Very flattering of you and your family to take such an interest in me—very!"

"Family!" said the other, laughing. "Come,

that is good! Come now! as if you don't know who I mean."

Anything like rallying came on Fermor like an east wind. "I really don't understand," he said, nervously. "I take my walks, and don't trouble myself with all I meet."

"That's a wonderful horse of yours, Mr. Hanbury," struck in a young officer from the other side. "Great quarters!"

Every one broke in here with delight on this topic. A conversational sluice had been lifted, and talk poured out. Horse or horsemanship is the one touch of nature that makes the man world a kin.

"What would you take for him?" "Good action?" "Showy?" "Hands high?" "In for the National?"

Hanbury, a good fellow, put his foot in the stirrup, mounted, and rode his beast up and down for them; that is, he told them all details with fulness and with delight. "Yes," he said, "I have entered him. I shall ride him myself."

"And win, by Jove!" said Young Brett, enthusiastically.

"Well," said Hanbury, with an expression of pleased doubt, "these things are so risky, and one never knows; but I *hope* to do respectably. You have seen him?" he said, turning to Captain Fermor.

"That horse of yours? Well—yes—I believe so."

"Of course he has," said Young Brett, with the same enthusiasm. "And, by Jove, don't he admire him! He told me so!"

Fermor measured Young Brett as if for the rack. The look made him penitent on the spot. "I see so many horses; but I really have not thought of the matter at all."

"O, but you must see him—see him regularly. He's worth a study, I can tell you. Let me see—to-morrow! Yes, I'll ride him down here."

Forsyth, another horse devotee, and pious in the faith, said, "Come at two, and have lunch."

"Thanks," said Hanbury, very earnest about his charger. "So I shall. Though, by the way——" and he started. "No. I can't at two. I have," he said, confidentially as it were to Fermor, "to go out with the two girls, you know. By the way," he added, still in his cloak of simplicity, "you ought to know them."

"Indeed! ought I?" said he, with an expression which was meant to be that of "amused surprise." "Well, granting that, to whom do you allude, pray?"

("I can play on this fellow," he said to himself, with satisfaction, "as upon a piano," which was scarcely a wise conviction, for he could only "strum" upon the piano, and in human music he was but an indifferent player.)

"O the Mantels, to be sure," said the Piano, not seeing that it was being played on. "As I said, it is so odd, almost so droll, meeting in that funny way. We have discussed you very often, I can tell you."

Something like "too much honour," or some

such speech of ironical humility, was on the captain's lips; but, in spite of himself, he felt complacent. Contempt and vanity were struggling for him. So he listened to hear more.

"Miss Manuel is very curious about you, and has all sorts of speculations. She says she is sure, from your face——"

An expression of interest spread over Fermor's face. But there was a Thersites in the regiment just opposite, a rough, loud-speaking, rude, and horribly truthful, a graduated professor of chaff, and he was listening. Fermor justly considered him a "low" fellow, but shrank from him as from a social chimney-sweep.

"Look at Fermor," he said; "he thinks every young lady in love with him. He turns back on the roads if he meets one, for fear of disturbing her peace of mind. Ho! ho!"

And an orchestra of "ho! ho's!" from the instrumentalists about, who relished this coarse music of Thersites, broke out.

Fermor turned red, and addressed his neighbour. He made it a rule, he always said, to take no notice of these "low" jokes. But John Hanbury, being a simple good-humoured creature that knew how to laugh, *did* laugh now very loud. It seemed to him such a comical accident that Thersites should have actually stumbled on the true state of things.

"Why," said he, "as to walking along the roads, I can tell you something," he said, looking slyly at Fermor. "You know there's no hiding of one's face exactly."

"O, ho!" said Thersites. "Was there ever anything like this? What did I say? Now we shall hear something." And the orchestra rubbed its hands, and even struck its thighs with delight.

John Hanbury was one of those who innocently overlook what is strict propriety, in the satisfaction of giving pleasure to others.

"I don't think it is quite fair," he said, looking from side to side; "but since——"

Fermor was blazing and glowing. "I must request," he said, in a low hasty voice to his neighbour, "there will be no more of this. I don't like it."

But Hanbury had been trained in wild places of India, where a joke, being a scarce thing, and, once trapped, is not enlarged without a sort of hunt.

So he nodded his head pleasantly to the right and to the left, as if he had a secret, and said, "He doesn't like it, though. It wouldn't be fair, you know."

Again the orchestra broke in, fortissimo: "Come, come! Nonsense! Out with it."

Major-General Shortall and Sir Charles Longman, who had long since strayed away and got lost in the bogs and marshes of conversation, where every step cost them infinite pains, heard the roar of the instruments, and accepted it as though it were a stick which some one held out to help them out.

"Cheerful," said the general. "What is it?"

"Rather some joke, I think," said Sir Charles, doubtfully, and gluing on his eye-glass to try and get a good view of it.

"O, sir," said Captain Thersites, "only a good thing about Fermor. Tell it, Mr. Hanbury, the general wants to hear it."

Hanbury, still relishing the thing with delight, though, indeed, there was neither joke nor story in the whole, was about to begin, when he chanced to look at his neighbour, and saw his crimson cheeks and his curled lip. Fermor said, "I request you will not take any freedom with my name; at least, I am sure you will respect that of those ladies——"

"Ah! don't mind him," roared the orchestra, suspecting what was going on. But this was a new view for Hanbury, who coloured in his turn. It was conveyed in an unpleasant, even an offensive manner, but the caution was just. His rough, coarse provincialism was stupidly making free with the sacred names of ladies. His face changed in a second.

"Let me suggest," said Fermor, seeing the effect, and suddenly taking out his razor for stropping, "a mess table is scarcely the place—you understand."

Nothing could be got out of Hanbury. Disappointed, the crowd, led by Thersites, followed at the heels of Fermor. Once in six months or so they had their revenge in this shape for many supercilious outrages. Personalities were showered on the luckless man, and even the general was seen to smile in a dry way. Fermor glowed and grew white, and glowed again, and devoted his neighbour to the fury of the gods.

The latter, quite sobered, whispered him earnestly, "Thank you a thousand times! I was so near doing it, and you saved me. I should never have forgiven myself."

That depended very much on his own turn of mind, but he might be sure of this, that Captain Fermor would never forgive him that public mortification. The captain chafed secretly, and looked at his glass as though he were chewing aloo-leaves. But there was worse in store for him.

Some one had flung the party at the head of the table a plank in the shape of a little bit of Indian discussion. "They have such odd words now," said General Shortall. "'Pon my soul, I can't make 'em out. They talk in the Times about wallahs and fellahs, and such stuff. Now, we always called them Blacks simply, and niggers—and as good a word as any, I say."

Captain Fermor, superior always to his own herd, was literary and well read, getting down green cases from Mr. Mudie. Part of his mind was setting "fellows" right on matters of information. So now, brooding and brooding over his injuries, he saw aid at hand, and listened.

"What—er—is a wallah?" said Sir Charles.

"And they have fellows they call ryots," said the general. "Not but that they have plenty of 'em out there—rows enough." Which remark brought forth, as was fitting, obsequious

hilarity. When this had died away, Captain Fermor saw the opportunity for putting out Mr. Mudie's information to interest.

"They call a wallah, sir," he said, with quiet respect, "one of those unhappy creatures who are obliged to work at forced labour—at the Suez Canal, for instance."

"Ah, quite so," said Sir Charles, interested, making his glass adhere.

"And a ryot," continued Fermor, half turning, "is, I believe, a—man who works in the fields for a few pots of rice, one of the greatly oppressed castes of India."

The colonel was looking round as if this explanation reflected great credit on the depôt, and the general seemed a little impressed, when John Hanbury, who had been listening with wonder, broke out with honest expostulation, "No, no, no! Come now. What *are* you talking of? That is the funniest jumble—I beg your pardon for saying so—but it's all wrong. And I think you know it is!"

Fermor's lip trembled a little. This was the fruit of being ever so little familiar with these horribly low and familiarly free persons!

"Why 'fellahs,'" continued Hanbury, laughing heartily, "are the Suez people. I wish a wallah heard you speak of him in that way, or a ryot either."

"There'd be a ryot, I suppose," said General Shortall, encouraged to repeat his joke.

"By Jove, yes! Why, they are farmers, cultivators, merchants. It's so funny how you contrived to jumble them."

"It may be funny," said Fermor, with an effort at calmness, "but, with all respect, sir, I think I am right."

"Nonsense, you're not serious."

"Have you read, might I ask, Jenkinson's or Thurlow's travels?" said Fermor, with chilly politeness.

"Not a line of them," said the other, laughing, "but if they say that, they're not worth reading."

"The world thinks differently," said Fermor, looking round with calm triumph. "Jenkinson is a standard book. I have the second edition up-stairs; got it down from London. He travelled five years in India."

"If it comes to that," said Hanbury, with a good-humoured smile, "I was there five-and-twenty, but I don't go upon that."

"Ha, ha!" said Thersites, "not bad that!"

The statement produced a weighty impression.

"That settles it," added Thersites.

"By Jove!" said little Brett, suddenly, "how lucky! I have a Hindustance dictionary somewhere!"

There was a cry of "Fetch it! fetch it!"

It was fetched, but it confirmed Hanbury and degraded Fermor. Hanbury became the Moonshoe or Pundit of the night, an office Fermor had always claimed. He suffered acutely. His "faculties" were now taken from him, and he could see that the (in his eyes) uncouth, half-

civilised fighting miscellany were enjoying his deprivation. He saw the general whisper grimly to the chief with an inquiring smile, and he had a faithful instinct that this was about him.

Presently that potentate rose and went his way. The dining crowd dispersed. They brought away with them the honest John Hanbury into a snug private room, where they lounged and stretched themselves after the rigours of the night, and clouded the air with fumes of tobacco and spirits. These were happy moments. The fighting men were boys again. They were attached by the genial simplicity of Hanbury, and the link was the horse. That noble brute was led out and admired over and over again. They became eloquent, witty, even wise, in that curious tongue. These simple natives interchanged the blank counters and cowries they had for ideas, with a marvellous fluency. They talked of the "National," now close at hand, of the course, of the great horse Baron, of the greater Irish horse that was coming, of the gentlemen riders, of the odds. Then of the "Welter Stakes," and of a grievance against the "handicapper," and monstrous oppression and injustice. And Hanbury, who in some other societies might have been insignificant and overlooked, riding in here on his horse, was immensely respected and hearkened to.

Fermor did not hear the last of that night's defeat for many days. In the barrack life there is a barrenness of incident, and this was welcome. He was sensitive to "low chaff," and though he habitually awed them as being inferior in intellect, it made him shudder one day to hear a low "ungentlemanly" nickname associated with his own. "The Wallah" was actually profanely joined with his sacred being, and one morning he heard "fellows" below, in the court, asking familiarly if "The Wallah" was in his room.

GOING TO LAW IN CEYLON.

WHAT cock-fighting is to a Malay, what horse-racing is to an Englishman, what quail-fighting is to a Chinaman, what pitch-and-toss is to a stable-boy, that Law is to a Singhalese or a Tamulian. It is the amusement that rouses him to exertion; that occupies his waking and his sleeping thoughts; that keeps him going to and fro between the district court and his village, forty miles away in the interior; that leads him to spend his last farthing on the desperate stake; to pledge his wife's last bangle, and his own last earring; that reduces him to beggary and worthlessness, and leaves him nothing to bequeath to his children save lawsuits.

Litigation seems to possess for the Eastern mind a charm little short of fascination. Like drink, the taste once acquired gains fresh force after each indulgence; and when no longer able to gamble in lawsuits himself, the hoary litigant becomes tutor and adviser of embryo disputants, and opens a school for false witnesses in his

village, where, enthroned as judge, he examines, cross-examines, corrects, and directs those in their parts who are to appear in the real court and give their testimony regarding what they know, or are to pretend to know, on the day of trial.

Kandir Kathergamer and Kasiar Tambyar are neighbours. There has for some time past been a growing ill feeling between these two worthies and their families. They are joint shareholders in a palmyra garden: that is to say, the one has an undivided share in it to the extent, as he says, of 1-4th of 3-9ths of 2-32ds by inheritance, and 2-473ds in favour of his wife; the other has some equally minute sub-division; and there is a difference of opinion between them as to the ownership of one particular tree. The palmyra season is fully come. Every five minutes you hear a "flop" in all the gardens, and then there is a rush of two or three persons, and perhaps a shout, and a cry, and a row; and if you inquire what it is about, you are told that this is a fruit, that, like the apple of discord, has fallen from a palmyra-tree, about which there is a dispute, and the struggle is which disputing shareholder shall basket the prize.

Our worthy neighbours aforesaid, whom, for the sake of brevity, we will call K. and T., have each set one of their offspring to watch the falling fruit, with strict injunctions to hold their own. Young Master K., his mother's pride, squats under a tree, basket beside him, and beguiles the time by tearing asunder with his teeth one of the yellow-coloured stringy fruits, till his face and hands are a fine rich ochre. Miss T., a young lady about four years Master K.'s senior, who knows how to make good use of her nails, takes up her position. The tree in dispute lies between them.

"Flop" goes a fruit behind Master K., up jumps Miss T., but sits down again; the fruit has fallen from a tree that is without dispute in K.'s domain. Master K. therefore appropriates it unmolested.

Presently there is a flop from one of Miss T.'s trees, and up she jumps and pursues the bounding ball till she has secured it.

At last, "flop" comes a fruit from the tree; up jump both, and make a rush at it. It rolls towards Master K., and thus far doth fortune favour him; but, too wise a strategist to leave unguarded his already secured fruits, he runs, dragging his half-filled basket after him. So likewise does Miss T. Master K. seizes the prize, or rather he stoops to seize it, and his hand is just upon it, when down comes Miss T. like a wolf on the fold, gives him a shove, and over he goes, basket and all, and she gets hold of the fruit; round he turns quick as thought, and gives her a punch in the side; down go her basket and nuts, and in a moment her ten claws are in unpleasant proximity to Master K.'s eyes. "My father and mother, I am dead!" cries he. Out rushes his fond paternal parent, his mother following with shrieks. Out come Mr. and Mrs. T. from their abode, and in no time Mr. K. has laid a short thick stick over Mrs. T.'s head, and left her stunned and bleed-

ing: while he and Mr. T. are rolling over each other on the ground, their long hair streaming about them. In rush the neighbours, and separate them. Loud is the strife of words, foul beyond expression the abuse by the females. "To the court with your wounded wife," says a friend; and away they go to their respective houses, screaming at each other all the while, and a swift runner is despatched to the Police Vidahn by the party of Mr. T., who, having wounds and blood to show, is in the better position. "This will never do," says K.'s elder brother, a veteran litigant. "You, too, must have blood and bruises to show." "Well, you see I have a scratch here and a thump there, and I am all over sand and dirt," says K. "Oh, that's good as far as it goes, but it is not enough; we must do some more. Come here," says he to Master K. the valiant, who began the affray; "let me see your face."

Master K., unsuspecting of evil, submits to his uncle's inspection, and in a second his worthy relative has drawn a sharp little knife over an inch of Master K.'s forehead, and the red blood comes streaming down.

"That will do," says he; "now carry him off to court before the others are ready. Get there first, and say T. did it with a *kai-katty*" (a formidable kind of cleaver, much used by the natives).

Off starts the procession, Master K. carried in the arms of his afflicted father, every drop of blood on his face carefully preserved to create the greater sensation, his head thrown back, his eyes languidly closed, his lips partially open, his hands dangling feebly by his side. Close behind him comes his maternal parent, "a Niobe, all tears," her dishevelled locks streaming over her shoulders, her head unveiled, all appearances disregarded in the affliction of the moment. Straight into the compound of the magistrate they rush, while other relatives follow, and a crowd collected on the way gathers round the gate.

"Oh, my Lord!" cries Mrs. K., and falls prostrate on the floor before the gentleman, and straightway Mr. K. lays his seemingly senseless burden before the "Doray."

If that functionary has had some experience, and suspects that Master K. is shamming, he will, perhaps, unexpectedly apply a little smelling-salts to his nose, and will then find out the trick. But, if very green, he will probably be taken in, and, after having given several very stringent orders for the apprehension of the accused, he will, just as he has gone inside again, be roused by Mr. T. and his party, bringing Mrs. T. in a sort of palanquin, with her head cut open. Both parties then enter cases against each other, and the magistrate has, amidst the most conflicting testimony, to determine whether both cases are true or both false, or which is true and which is false.

There is no exaggeration in the above story; it is what happens daily. I bear in mind especially one case in which a man, after cutting a woman's forehead open, in a garden at three P.M.,

cut open the forehead of a girl of his party with her own consent, and in so doing very nearly severed an important artery. Then the two opposing factions entered counter charges against each other, of exactly the same nature.

When a magistrate's district is compact, and the villages are easy of access, his best plan in the early part of his career is to act the detective now and then. The knowledge that his habits are locomotive, and that he will pass down upon a place unexpectedly, is a great point in his favour.

I remember spending half a day, when new to my work, in trying to find out where a man lived. The question was, whether he could have heard the falling of certain cocoa-nuts from a tree, in a case for stealing the fruit? The adverse party said he did not live in the hut where he said he did live, and heard the sound. As I could come to no satisfactory conclusion by the evidence, I found some excuse for adjourning the case till next day; and that evening about nine, I quietly proceeded to the place, accompanied by a guide and an officer of the court, who had been kept in ignorance of my plans, and summoned the inmates. Out stepped my friend fresh from his mat, and made his salaam. I then sent a man up the cocoa-nut-tree, which was at some distance, while I stood close to the hut, to ascertain if the fruit could be heard falling. Soon there was a "thud" on the sand, another, and another, so those two points were established. Nevertheless, the case eventually was shown to be a false one. This mode of procedure may seem very irregular to English lawyers; but in a land where the European stands alone, where the rule is that every witness deceives if he can, and that no regard whatever is paid to the solemnity of an oath, or rather an affirmation, it is a very good way, occasionally.

In the district where I write this, my predecessor once went to a remote village on judicial business. On his way, a man of influence came to him, and said that his granary had been broken into on the previous night, the paddy (or rice with the husk on) stolen, his watcher murdered, and the body made away with. The judge went to the spot indicated, and there he found paddy strewn about and blood upon the sleeping mats of the watcher. An information was laid against certain parties, and inquiry duly made. Subsequently it turned out that the murdered man was alive and well, but in concealment; that the paddy had purposely been scattered about, and the blood sprinkled on the mat by the informant. In fact, the whole affair was a false and malicious conspiracy.

In the north of the island, when a murder or any other crime was committed, I used to go to the house of the suspected murderer, and leave a polite message for him to come and be hanged. He always came. The hanging was another affair. The fact is, that in that district concealment was very difficult, and the attachment of the people to their homes and families is such, that a man preferred standing

his trial and trusting to the glorious uncertainty of the law, rather than abscond and leave his country for life.

But it is in the long-drawn land case, extending over two, four, six, ten, years, that the native is in his glory. There it is that he finds full scope for his powers of plotting and counter-plotting. Does the plaintiff file a mortgage bond? Straightway he produces a release. Does he sue on a bill? Here is a stamped receipt. Is it a will that he goes upon? The defendant has a testamentary paper of a later date. Has he a dowry deed of 1801? Here is a purchase deed of 1798. All these documents are drawn up in due form, and are made to assume a venerable appearance: the notary uniting with that office the more lucrative one of forger. I once committed a gentleman of the profession for forgery. It was proved that at the time the victim's name was forged he was sitting on an inquest at some distance; and it is generally held that no one can be in two places at once; but the jury thought otherwise, and acquitted the prisoner; "a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind." I have before me a plaint for "the 307-1920th undivided share" of a small patch of land, and I could give numerous instances of hard-fought battles for minute shares in a single tree worth from six to twenty shillings.

In spite of all this, happily, submission to constituted authority is one of the characteristics of Asiatics; however excited, and however numerous they may be, a single European magistrate may go with perfect impunity among contending factions, and they will submit to his commands like children.

I was roused one night by the intelligence that there was a grand uproar at a seaport about four miles from where I lived. The Tamul seafaring men are splendid fellows—free and independent in their bearing, broad-chested and muscular, and when they do fight, it is with a will. It appeared, subsequently, that there were two parties, the "East Indians" and the "West Indians." The Westerns wished to proceed in due state by torchlight in a wedding procession through the east-end, and the Easterns said it should not be. They might perambulate the west-end to their hearts' content, but beyond their boundary, they should not come. The East Indians rallied at their barrier, towards sunset, with clubs and other weapons, and awaited the course of events. They had not to wait long. Soon the sound of the clarionet and tom-tom are heard in the distance. "Hark, 'tis the Indian drum!" Nearer and nearer comes the procession, the bridegroom seated in an open car borne on men's shoulders, and behind him a closed palanquin. A halt, and a parley by the torchlight. "What do ye in the East Indian country?" A reply. Then, "No you won't." "Yes we will." "Will you, then?" (The Westerns are all unarmed.) "Yes; who are you that speak so proudly?" says an Eastern to a Western chief, and aims a blow at him. (It was an Eastern that began it.) The Westerns step back, and open fly the

doors of the closed palanquin. The Easterns press forward. "Who is in it?" They learn the next minute, when a dozen Western hands are thrust in and drawn out again, and a dozen swords and other weapons gleam for a moment in the air, and come showering down upon Eastern skulls. When I examined next morning the cuts and the slashes, my wonder was that none were killed; but the amount of knocking about that a rice-cater's head can stand, is marvellous. Taken by surprise, the Easterns made stand for a few moments, and then retreated in confusion. Close by the scene of action was a new strongly-built store, and into it a number of them retreated and made fast the door. The Westerns thereupon kept watch and ward over them. They lighted in the street a blazing fire, so that none could escape unseen, and on the walls they wrote in Tamil, "This is the jail bazaar." Meanwhile, some of the Eastern party who had remained outside slunk off through by-ways to where I lived, and gave me as much information as suited their interests. On reaching the spot, I found a crowd collected before the bazaar, and the embers of the fire in the road. When the prisoners within were told I had arrived, they thought it was a ruse to get them out. With the greatest caution they opened one of the doors ever so little, and when they saw I really was there, out they came, twenty-three in all, I think. I know that I marched off forty fellows to the court-house that night, and they went as submissively as lambs.

Caste distinctions are a fruitful source of dispute. Under native rule, the violation of any prescribed custom, or the attempt to do what was only permitted to a higher caste, was a very serious offence. For instance, in the Kandian country, it was a crime punishable with death for any one not of the royal family to whitewash his house. At the present day, in spite of the complete discountenance of caste by government, one constantly hears of quarrels in the remoter parts of the island—and even near town, where civilisation spreads less slowly—in consequence of a low-caste man "aping his betters," as the high caste consider it. For such a man to tile his house instead of thatching it, to wear his clothes below the knee, to allow his wife to drape herself beyond the prescribed rule, to put on earrings if a Tamulian, to celebrate a wedding to the sound of music and with the decorations of clothes—all these are high crimes and misdemeanors, and the perpetrators are liable, if not protected, to have their heads broken and their houses burned about their ears. The proper course for a public officer to pursue in such cases is to give the offenders all the protection of the law; if need be, to be present himself, to see that the headmen, who generally sympathise with and are in league with the high caste, do their duty; and to visit with condign punishment any one who sets authority at defiance. A little firmness in one or two cases has a marvellous effect, and the battle has seldom to be fought more than once in the same place.

One way in which an influential man, or party of men, sometimes take their revenge on a lower or weaker section of the village; is to forbid the washerman to wash for them, or the barber to shave them. They are then at a dead stop; for nothing would induce a man not of the washer caste to shoulder his bundle and get up his own cotton: nor can he, nor would he, make a barber of himself by shaving his own or his fellow's chin. This is sometimes a rather difficult measure to meet, for, of course, under our government the barber and the "dhobie," or washerman, are free agents, and it is not easy to say exactly who the person is who has laid his veto upon the operations of the two functionaries. Moreover, were the parties aggrieved to be directed to bring an action for damages against the disturber of their peace, they would have to tarry while their beards were growing and their clothes getting dirtier. It is a ludicrous sight on these occasions to a man who shaves himself every day, to see some twenty or thirty lugubrious-looking fellows standing in a row, pointing dolefully to their bristly chins in the most helpless manner, and crying for some one to shave them. The magistrate has to remonstrate with the barber and the dhobie, and after a while some compromise is made, and the village appears next day with its chin shorn and its clothes washed.

In the Kandian province there is a class of people called Rhodias. They are outcasts, and no words can express the loathing with which they are regarded by the Kandians. There is nothing repulsive in their appearance: on the contrary, their women are the handsomest in the island, erect as arrows, and graceful as antelopes. Who they are, is not very clearly ascertained. My own idea is, that they were the aborigines of the island, and that the Gangetic race who subdued the island and built the famous city of Ameradhapura subjugated them. Old John Knox, who was a captive in Ceylon in the year 1679, during the time when Kandy had a king, and who has written a truthful work on the island, says that they were "Dodda Vedals, which signifies hunters," and he relates how it was their special duty to provide game for the king, and how they once produced before him some flesh which he enjoyed so much that he told them to get some more. The barber is in Asia, as in Europe, the great news monger, and the next morning the scraper of the royal chin communicated to his majesty the horrible secret that what he had so enjoyed was human flesh.

Filled with rage, the king made a decree that, henceforth and for ever, the descendants of these persons should be outcasts, and be held in loathing and abhorrence; and from time to time, when any of his nobles offended him, he ordered that they and their families should become "Rhodias"—a punishment worse than death. There is at the present day the remnant of a tribe of men who were once more numerous, who live a wild life in the forest, and are, in point of civilisation, of the very lowest grade,

and they are generally called "Veddahs." They use the bow and arrow, and live by the chase. They shun the haunts of other men, abhor everything like a settled life, are small of stature, squalid and repulsive in appearance, and know nothing save the arts of woodcraft. Whether between these Veddahs and the Rhodias (Knox's "Dodda Vedahs") there be any affinity, I cannot say, but the mere fact that they differ so much in appearance is not alone proof to the contrary, for the one tribe has been for centuries living in the unhealthiest jungles of the island, while the other has occupied the most healthy regions, and been constantly intermingled with the very best blood in the land—that of the families of nobles who were degraded and compelled to unite with them. Not being allowed to till the soil, the Veddahs live by their wits partly, and are regarded as great thieves. They make hide ropes, baskets, and mats, as well as formidable whips, which are cracked with the report of a pistol before members of the aristocracy when on festive occasions they move in procession. The women spin plates on their fingers, and perform other little tricks of like nature. They are a race much to be pitied, and at present terribly degraded; and it will be long before the Singhalese will overcome their aversion to them. They crouch before a well-born native as a dog would, and are regarded as little better than dogs.

DANGEROUS EYES.

"Blue eyes melt: Dark eyes burn."
CORNING SAYING.

THE eyes that melt! The eyes that burn!
The lips that make a lover yearn!
These flash'd on my bewilder'd sight
Like meteors of the Northern Night!

Then said I, in my wild amaze,
What stars be they that greet my gaze?
Where shall my shivering rudder turn?
To eyes that melt, or eyes that burn?

Ah! safer far the darkling sea,
Than where such perilous signals be,—
To rock, and storm, and whirlwind, turn,
From eyes that melt, and eyes that burn!

QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER XLVII. RANELAGH WITH THE LIGHTS OUT.

It was close on one o'clock in the morning, after the countess had gone to supper with her friends, that Lily had packed up such of her tyrant's effects as she ordinarily took home with her, and was ready to go home herself.

She knew the way to the Gardens, and from the Gardens, just as an imprisoned antelope in a menagerie may know its inner lair and its outer paddock, and the bars where the sight-seers stand to give it crumbs of cake. Beyond this there was a vasty void, only there were no visitors at the grate to give cakes to Lily.

They lived in a front parlour and bedroom, in a little one-story house in a by-street, close to the river-side. There was a scrap of garden in front, full of very big oleanders and sunflowers. The brass plate, too, which proclaimed that here was an academy for young ladies and gentlemen by Mr. Kafooze, seemed nearly as big as the little green door to which it was screwed. It was a tidy little house, in a tidy little street; only, as all the inhabitants did their washing at home, a smell, rather too strongly pronounced, of soapsuds and damp linen, and the wash-tub generally, hung about it, morning, noon and night. All the little doors had big brass plates upon them. Mr. Kafooze's academy was flanked on one side by a lady who brought people into the world, and, when they had had enough of that ball, assisted them out of it, even to robbing them for their journey; and, on the other, by a distinguished foreigner from Oriental climes, who gave himself out simply as "Fung-yan, Chinese," as though the bare fact of that being his name and nation was amply sufficient to satisfy any purpose of legitimate curiosity. Fung-yan dressed in the European manner, and, unless he wore his pigtail underneath his coat, had even parted with that celestial appendage. His smooth, india-rubber face, twinkling black eyes, and eternal simper, had made him not unpopular with the fair sex. He had even contrived to court, in pigeon-English, the widow of a retired publican with a small annuity, and, to the great scandal of some of the more orthodox Christians of the district, Mrs. Biff, formerly of the King of Prussia, licensed to sell, &c., had become Mrs. Fung-yan. Fung, however, was married at the parish church; it is true that he was accused of burning fireworks and sacrificing half a bushel of periwinkles to his joss in the back garden on the first evening of his honeymoon; but he kept his head high, paid his way, and extorted respect from the neighbourhood. Some said that he swept a crossing, in Chinese costume, for a living; others, that he went round the country swallowing molten sealing-wax, and producing globes full of gold fish from his stomach; a third party would have it that he assisted behind the counter of a tea-dealer in Leadenhall-street; while a fourth insisted that he was an interpreter at a water-side police-court. I think, myself, that Fung-yan was a stevedore down in the docks, where years before he had arrived, a rice-fed, pig-tailed coolie on board an East Indiaman.

The night-watchman held his lantern up to Lily's face as she glided past him towards the water-gate of Ranelagh.

"Good-night, miss."

"Good-night, Mr. Buckleshaw."

"Have my great-coat, miss? It's woundy cold. I shan't miss it."

"Thank you, no, Mr. Buckleshaw. I am well wrapped up. Good-night again."

"It's a sin and a shame to send that poor young gal home at all hours o' night," grumbled the night-watchman, who was an old soldier, and testy and kind hearted, as old soldiers usually

are. "It's a burning shame, and so it is. Them furriners don't seem to care a brass farden what becomes of their own flesh and blood. Such muck, too, as they live upon! The young gal ain't a furriner, though I wonder where that she-devil, who's sending the people crazy with her rough-riding, got hold of her. Well, it ain't no business of mine." And the night-watchman lighted another pipe, and addressed himself once more to the not very interesting task of crunching, with heavy footsteps, the frozen gravel.

The policemen on the beat knew Lily quite well, and more than one cheery "Good-night, miss," greeted her on her way homeward. There was one gallant constable who, when he happened to be on night-duty, always insisted on seeing her to the corner of her street, which happened to be within the limits of his beat. While thus occupied—for Lily could not repel him, he was so civil and obliging—they passed the great inspector himself, in a short cape, and carrying a bamboo cane, and followed by a discreet sergeant.

The inspector stopped. The discreet sergeant, who was of a somewhat suspicious nature, turned his bull's-eye full on Lily, shook his head, and whistled as loudly as the rules of discipline, and his respect for his superior officer, would permit him to do.

"At your old tricks again, Drippan," the inspector remarked, severely. "Who is this young woman?"

Lily was terribly frightened. Drippan, however, who was the gallant constable, hastened to explain. Fortunately, the inspector had on more than one occasion patronised Ranelagh with his wife and family, and had seen Lily waiting for Madame Ernestine at the stage-door of the circus. He was quite satisfied with Constable Drippan's tale, and was even good enough to tell Lily that, if she liked, a constable should escort her, so far as the boundaries of his beat permitted, towards her home, every night.

The next time Mr. Drippan met her he cleared up the mystery of the inspector's severity at their first meeting.

"Hi've got henemies, miss," he explained, "henemies has his sworn to 'ave my 'art's blood, let alone rewinging my good name, and reporting on me at the station when I ain't done nothin'. I should be Hinspector Drippan but for those henemies."

Lily said she was very sorry.

"Well you may be," pursued this victim of malevolence. "I've been druv from beat to beat in a way that's lawful. The minds of sergeants 'ave bin poisoned agin me, and I've been put hunder stoppages for nothink at all."

Lily told him she was very grieved, but was still somewhat puzzled to learn what his sorrow really was.

"I 'ave bin," he continued, in a dark whisper, "a perliceman in Grosvenor-square. I was humiversally respected and moved in the fust families. It was hall halong of a puffidious nussmaid as kep' company with a Fiend in

Human Shape in the Life Guards. She split on me, and the cook—which had bin there seven year—lost her sitiuation. Vy did the hinspector 'ave me up before the commissioners, and play old Gooseberry with me? Because he were jealous. Because I had put his nose outer joint. Ha!"

He paused, as though for sympathy, but Lily, not knowing precisely what to say, went on.

"They're hall agin me. It's hall known at 'ed-quarters, and they'd as soon promote the fireman's dog as me. Hi ham a parayur amongst my brother hoficers. Do I drink? Did Hi hever do the doss when on dooty? Let 'em prove their words. They ses I runs arter the gals. My 'art is blighted. They've sent me down to this jolly old South Lambeth, where there's nothink but cads, costermongers, and frid fish. Hi ham treated in the most exasperatin' way, and hif this sort o' thing's to go on, Hi'm blowed hif Hi don't write to the Weekly Dispatch."

I am ashamed to confess that little Lily—who, having had her own peines de cœur, should have learnt sympathy for another's woe—was not very forcibly impressed by this lamentable tale. I am afraid, indeed, that she was once or twice very near laughing. Poor soul, it was but little matter for mirth she had now. The gallant but unfortunate Drippan did not fail to mark her culpable indifference. From that night he offered to escort her no more; nay, once meeting her at her own street corner, he pretended not to know her, and even murmured, in a muffled tone, the injurious words, "Move on!" But Lily often met the inspector, and he had always a kind word for her.

She dared not go to bed, this night of the supper, until her tyrant came home, and when she had lighted a candle, and unpacked the bundle she had brought from Ranelagh, sat down in the little parlour to read. A Sunday newspaper was the only literary matter at hand, and she had read it through at least twice before since the beginning of the week; but she addressed herself again, and most industriously, to its perusal, going through all the advertisements of the splendid corner public-houses, the snug little free beer-shops, the eligible openings in the chandlery line, the unequalled tobacconists', stationery, and Berlin wool businesses for sale, wondering whether they all found purchasers, and whether it took six months or twelve for their lucky purchasers to realise large fortunes. And then she attacked the page devoted to theatricals, and read how Ranelagh was nightly the resort of the highest rank and fashion; how the experiment of a winter season had been a complete success, and how Mr. M'Variety was gaining golden opinions from all sorts of people. "What were golden opinions, Lily wondered—money? If that were so, it was strange, for Mr. M'Variety was always grumbling to the countess about the money he was losing. Then Lily went on to read about the countess herself. How Madame Ernestine was the cynosure of all eyes. How her youth,

her beauty, her grace and agility were the delight of thousands, and how she had created, in the high school of horsemanship, a position in which she might have many imitators, but few compeers. A brief biography of the gifted equestrian followed this glowing criticism. Lily learnt, to her astonishment, that the countess was of Spanish extraction—of a noble Andalusian family, indeed; that her mother (in the land of the dark mantilla and the bewitching cachuca) was known as the Pearl of Seville; but that reverses of fortune had forced her papa to adopt the lowly, but still honourable, profession of a matador. Educated in the Tersichorean department of the Conservatory at Milan, the countess had been instructed in the mysteries of the high school of horsemanship by an Arab sheik, assisted by the Master of the Horse to the Emperor of Austria. Her stud comprised an Andalusian barb, an Estremaduran jennet, a thorough-bred Arab from the Sahara, and a Persian filly from Tiflis. She had been married in early life to an English gentleman of high rank and vast wealth; but the union had not proved a happy one, and the gifted and beauteous Madame Ernestine was now a widow. She had gone through a series of the most startling and romantic adventures, and had received costly presents, mostly consisting of diamonds, from the majority of the sovereigns of Europe. She was eminently accomplished: being a mistress of five languages, and a skilful dancer, painter, and modeller of wax flowers. In age she might be bordering on her twenty-seventh year. Lily could not help asking herself, when she had come to the end of this astonishing narrative, whether it was all true; whether the countess was indeed the wonderful person they made her out to be; or whether newspapers were even addicted to the practice for which the girls at her school used to be punished: to wit, lying.

It must have been nearly two in the morning when the landlord, Mr. Kafooze, knocked at her door, and asked if he might come in. The candle had a very long wick by this time, and Lily had laid down the imaginative newspaper, and was nodding wearily. She started up at the landlord's voice, and bade him enter.

Mr. Kafooze was a very little old man, with a white smooth poll very like a billiard-ball, and reddish eyes, and no perceptible teeth, and a weak piping voice. He dressed habitually in black, had a limp wisp of white kerchief round his neck, and was, perhaps, the last man in South Lambeth who wore knee-breeches, slack cotton hose, and plated buckles in his shoes. The small-clothes and buckles, added to his baldness, were of no small service to him among his neighbours. Parents liked to send their children to a school of which the master looked at once so very clerical and so very scholastic. Mr. Kafooze's academy was on the humblest scale. Some twenty little boys and girls used to come there every morning and afternoon, to all appearance for three purposes: to crack nuts, to munch apples,

and to pinch one another. When the last nut was cracked, the last apple devoured, and the last pinch-extracted squeal uttered, school was dismissed. The pupils generally went home black and blue, so far as their arms were concerned, but not through any corporal chastisement inflicted by Mr. Kafooze. That placid old man had not so much as a halfpenny cane in his academy. His assistant in the business of education was his niece, a humpbacked young person, with red hair, and a firmament of freckles on her countenance, who revelled in the somewhat exceptional name of Rhodope, who passed the major portion of her time either in endeavouring to mollify the bunions with which she was troubled, or in relating ghost stories (of which she had a vast stock) in an under tone to the three senior pupils. Mr. Kafooze sat apart at a little desk, and when the scholars were unusually noisy, would tell them mildly that they were "worse than bluebottles." He was generally intent on the contemplation of a celestial globe, and when he had (as it seemed, being short sighted) smelt at this orb for many minutes, he would rush away to his desk, bury his nose in a quire of foolscap, and cover at least two pages with blots, scrawls, dashes, and hieroglyphical characters of strange design. Whence arose, even among Mr. Kafooze's most friendly critics, a rumour that he was engaged in the discovery of the perpetual motion, to be accomplished by means of clock-work and balloons, and that he had, in furtherance of his scientific ends, entered into a compact with the Evil One. But everybody agreed that "he knew a deal," and was exceedingly genteel in his manners.

"It's only me, my dear," piped Mr. Kafooze, entering the parlour with a little lamp in one hand. With the disengaged hand, which was so thin and shrivelled as to be well-nigh transparent, he shaded the light from Lily.

"You watch late to-night," he resumed, in his weak treble. "Hasn't your mamma come home yet?"

"Madame is supping with some friends," Lily answered, quietly. "Madame" was a discreet compromise into the use of which she had been drilled by the Wild Woman. "Dare to call me anything else, and I will skin you alive, you viper," was her amiable warning to her dependent.

"Ah! it's no business of mine. She's a very good lodger, when she's in a good temper, and has every right to her latch-key. I hope she's enjoying herself. What a famous schoolmistress your mamma would make? Ah! she'd make the little ones mind, I'll warrant you. They don't mind me a bit, nor my niece Rhodope."

"But you, Mr. Kafooze," said Lily, who was accustomed to the little old man, who often came in at night for a quiet gossip, "you are up very late, too."

"Oh! I, my dear young lady, I'm always up late. It's my way. I've so much to do. I sit up with the stars."

Lily thought Mr. Kafooze's fellow watchers were most delightful company, and told him, almost enthusiastically, that she loved to sit up and look at the stars.

"Ah! that isn't it, exactly," rejoined Mr. Kafooze, shaking his head, and with a half sigh. "Twinkle, twinkle, little star, and all that sort of thing. I read the stars, my dear, and have come to know them. Deary me! but there's a deal more to be learnt about them," he added, with another sigh.

"And what do they tell you, Mr. Kafooze?" asked Lily.

"A deal that's good, and a deal that's bad, my dear," the star-gazer replied. "They tell me little that's worth knowing about myself, however. If the stars would be good enough to inform me how it is that I can't earn more than two pound a week, I'd be obliged to them, that's all. The stars, my dear, I can tell you in confidence, have been my stumbling-blocks all through life. My father turned me out of doors, and cut me off—not with a shilling, but without one—all owing to the stars. I attribute my failure in the haberdashery line in the year 'twenty-three, entirely to the stars. I published a 'Voice from the Stars' in the shape of an almanack, for three years running, and lost a very pretty penny by it. And now I've come down to what you see. But I trust in the stars as firmly as ever; and indeed my motive in looking in upon you to-night, was to ask you whether you could tell me what star your mamma was born under. I shouldn't like to ask her myself, for you see she has rather a quick temper."

"I am sure I don't know, Mr. Kafooze," replied Lily, "but I will ask her, if you like."

"For goodness' sake, don't, my dear young lady," Mr. Kafooze interposed, hastily. "She's a remarkable woman, is your mamma, and she might do something dreadful if you were inquisitive about her affairs. I thought that perhaps she might have mentioned something to you incidentally about the stars."

"I do not know, Mr. Kafooze," said Lily, very sadly, who felt somehow impelled to place confidence in the little bald-headed schoolmaster, "whether she is my mamma or not. One day she tells me she is; but the next she denies it, and forbids me to call her anything but Madame. I know that she treats me very unkindly, and that I am very unhappy, Mr. Kafooze."

She buried her face in her hands. She could not help the confession. It was the first wail—the first outcry under cruel agony.

"Hush, hush!" piped the schoolmaster; "you mustn't cry, you mustn't fret, my dear. That would never do. You'll wake the lodger up—as worthy a young man as ever lived, and plays the trombone at Ranelagh for five-and-twenty shillings a week."

He sat down by her side on the little horse-hair sofa, and fell to chafing one of her little hands between his own parchment palms.

"Don't mind me," he quavered; "I'm old

enough to be your great-grandfather. I'm seventy-two, but I don't fret now; I leave it all to the stars."

Lily dried her eyes, and admitted that she had been very foolish, and besought the schoolmaster not to tell madame of what had passed.

"It is not that she strikes me," she explained. "She is always threatening, but she has seldom gone beyond a push, and has never gone so far as she did to-night when she menaced me with her horsewhip. But oh, Mr. Kafooze, she strikes me with her tongue—with her cruel, cruel tongue. Night and day she browbeats and insults me. What am I to do? You have seen me here. How am I to conciliate her? How have I offended her? Do I look, do I act, like a bad, wicked girl?"

"You are a little angel, my dear," quoth old Mr. Kafooze; "a dear, persecuted angel; but you must not fret. You must leave it to time and to the stars. They will make it all right. I won't say that they will avenge you; because vengeance does not belong to the stars."

Lily could only repeat that she was very unhappy—that she did everything she could to please her hard task-mistress, and that it was not her fault.

"It's nobody's fault, my dear," urged the little schoolmaster. "Nobody but Destiny's. I've been fighting against Destiny for three-score years and ten, and she's had her heel upon me, and trampled me under foot many and many a time. But I'll get the best of her, and have her under my foot, the jade!" he concluded, clenching his bony hand, and in a most valorous pipe.

The sound of a key was heard turning in the door.

"That's your mamma," quoth he, hastily. "I wouldn't have her see me here for twenty pound. Good-night, my dear. Your mamma's got a destiny too; only I want to know more about her star before I can tell you what it is. I'm afraid it's a bad one." And Mr. Kafooze vanished.

Two persons came into the little parlour: one was the countess, flushed and radiant, the other was Thomas Tuttleshell, Esquire. That gentleman Lily had never before seen; but the countess had often spoken of him as a fellow who had been useful to her. She had, decidedly, but few surplus funds in the way of gratitude, our countess, and dispensed them very grudgingly.

She had torn off her mantle, had flung herself on to the sofa, and sat in her gay dress, fanning herself. Lily had seen her as hot and as excited after her performance in the French booth as the Wild Woman; but she seemed scarcely the same being now. She was different in mien, in voice, in gesture. She was transformed.

Thomas Tuttleshell had escorted her from supper, but whither afterwards, Lily knew not. It was certain that madame and her friends were not in the gardens when the girl left. Perhaps Sir William Long had still chambers where he could conjure up the image of his old parties. Perhaps Thomas knew of some quiet hotel in

the neighbourhood of St. James's, where, even after supper hours, guests who wished to talk, and smoke, and drink champagne, were welcome.

"It's very late—very late, indeed," was the courteous remark of the countess to Thomas, as she flung away her fan, and gave a great yawn; "you had better go home."

"Much obliged to you," thus Thomas; "but allow me at least to apologise for keeping this pretty young lady, whom I presume to be your daughter, up to such a very unseemly hour. You see, miss, that your mamma——"

"My servant needs none of your apologies," the countess interrupted, with her old haughtiness. "If she complained of waiting up early or late, just as it suited my good will and pleasure, I'd break every bone in her skin."

"It would be a pity to hurt such pretty bones."

"Never mind whether they are ugly or pretty. They are none of yours. They are mine. Now, go away, there's a good man. I am tired to death."

"Allow me at least to light a cigar. It's deuced cold."

"I do not allow smoking in my apartments."

"By Jove, Ernestine," cried the usually placable Tom, losing all patience under these continual rebuffs, "you're very different now from what you were when I took you off the boards in France. Why, but for the few Louis that Italian fellow won at the trente et quarante, you wouldn't have had a shoe to your foot."

"I have nothing to do with what I was yesterday. It is enough for me to think of what I am to-day, and what I may be to-morrow." Spoken like a brave and consistent countess.

"At least," remonstrated Tom, "you might remember that I got you a good engagement, and, as an old friend, am at least entitled to a little consideration."

"A fig for your engagements," the woman cried, snapping her fingers; "a fig for the miserable ten pounds a week which your master, M'Variety, gives me. Dix livres sterling. Je me mouche avec ces gages-là!"

"You were glad enough to get them, when I offered the engagement to you at Lyons, and lent you the money to come over to England."

"I might have been. It is so very long ago. In the century before last, I think. Chantez-moi quelque chose de nouveau."

"It was this very summer," grumbled Tom.

"A fig for last summer! a fig for my old friends. Je m'en fiche!" the woman cried. "I have found other old friends—and superb ones, too. I have been in the mud long enough. Now I am about to revenge myself."

"Then I suppose you don't want to see me any more. I wish you a very good-night." Tom was going away in dudgeon.

On the contrary, the countess condescended to explain, "I want to see you every day. You can be very useful to me, l'oncle Thomas. Allons, soyons amis, mon vieux. Tapez là."

She held out her hand in a scornful manner to Mr. Tuttleshell, who took it, and bowed,

somewhat stiffly, for he was still but ill pleased, and was going, when the countess started up and placed herself between him and the door.

"No, we are not going to part like that," she cried, half sarcastically, and half caressingly.

"Pas de rancune, mon brave. You must continue to serve me. I want you here to-morrow morning. I want to talk to you before ces messieurs arrivent. Is not to-morrow—to-day, rather, I would say—Saturday? Have they not promised to so call. Am I not to dine with them, there being a *relâche* at the Gardens? Allons, donnez-moi la patte."

She had still, though haggard, and ruddled, a cajoling kind of way about her which was not ineffective. Tom gave her his hand this time in perfect amity, and, promising to be with her again before noon, took his leave.

He had been slyly examining Lily while parleying with the countess. "By Jove! what a pretty little thing," quoth Thomas Tuttleshell, Esquire, as he put Mr. Kafooze's brass-plate between himself and the parlour. "What a pity she should have such an old tigress for a mother. Clever woman, though. Fiendishly clever. In her day, superb. Sadly fallen off, though. I suppose the little one is her daughter. I wonder what Billy Long's game is. He's sown his wild oats; yet they're a sly lot, these swells: always up to something. He said to-night's meeting was as good as a thousand pounds to him. I wish he'd give me five hundred on account. Heigho! C-a-b!" And Tom Tuttleshell hailed a four-wheeler, and was driven home to bed.

CHAPTER XLVIII. DREAMLAND.

It was a very long time since the girl had dreamed. How could she dream, she had no time. Her life had been wakeful, and hard, and cruel. She had been bedded on no soft pillow, dandled to sleep in no loving arms. Every one around her had been awake, and watchful to strike at her. Tranquil slumbers and bright visions she had just tasted of, here and there, and for a moment; but they had been rudely broken, and intervals of long years rolled between. Sometimes, as a quiet and not unhappy little child, the plaything of the school at Stockwell, she had dreamed, nestling in the soothing shadow of the Misses Bunycastle's skirts. Then she had certainly dreamed for a whole afternoon at the Greenwich dinner, and for a whole day at Cutwig and Co.'s. A brief and blissful dream had been her sojourn at Madame de Kergolay's; but the waking up only seemed the ruder and more dreadful. Since she had groaned under the sway of the horrible woman, who, in her paint and out of her paint, on the boards and off the boards, was always wild, and capricious, and intolerable, she had forgotten what it was to dream, or rather she had been as one walking in her sleep, mobile, eyes wide open and unconscious. So she might have gone on, to find herself, at last, a dull, stupidified, apathetic drudge, too crushed and listless to be discontented. But this was not to be. A great change

was fated to come over her. She was to dream again, and, for a time, delightfully.

The change began on the very morning after the notable supper of the countess with her old friends. She ceased, suddenly, to treat Lily in the same manner as heretofore. She was no longer brutal, sarcastic, impatient with her. She had her old temper, our countess; but when she found that she was losing, or, the rather, on the point of giving way to her temper, she would bite her lips, and stamp her foot, and crisp her fingers, until the fit had passed off. Her self-control was wonderful. Lily was astounded at it; and Mr. Kafooze, at first puzzled, was ultimately led to ascribe the alteration to the conjunction of some more favourable planets in the horoscope. The cardinal point in the mild, although somewhat muddled, philosophy of the little old schoolmaster was neither to praise nor to censure his fellow-creatures for anything. If things went badly, he bowed to the fiat of the stars; and if they went well, he thanked the stars for it. Perhaps, all things considered, one might have a worse system of philosophy than the Kafoozian.

They had visitors in the humble little sitting-room the morrow of the supper. The curiosity of the street was all agog when the distinguished visitors arrived. They came in private carriages—in a Brougham and pair and a cabriolet. The tiger leaped to the latter vehicle, a youth of rosy countenance and confident mien, descended into Mr. Kafooze's garden, plucked two roses, stuck one of the flowers in his horse's headstall, and another in his own button-hole, and then gave himself up to whistling, not defiantly, but with an air of cheerful superiority to things in general, and South Lambeth in particular.

Fung-yau, Chinese, who happened to be at home at the time (he always returned at noon to lunch on liver and bacon, rice, and bottled stout), came out to his front door, and surveyed the scene with his never-failing simper, just as his three hundred million prototypes simper as they cross the bridge on the willow pattern plate, or parch tea-leaves in copper pans, surrounded by flowery gardens and curly pagodas, on the grocers' chests. Most of the inhabitants of the street, however, were of opinion that the visit had something to do with a projected railway, the proximate driving of which through their quiet street, and consequent demolition of their dwellings, kept them in a chronic state of apprehension; while two or three ladies of mature age shook their heads, and opined that it was no business of theirs, but that some people had no sense of what was right and proper, especially foreign horse-riders. It was enough to make decent Christian people—having paid rates and taxes for years, and brought up large families most respectable—believe the world was coming to an end, and to cause the bones of their (the Christian bodies') grand-parents to turn in their graves.

Meanwhile, the visitors, quite unconscious of these conflicting criticisms, had made their way

into the little parlour. School was just breaking up as they passed through the passage, and, during the hour of recreation, the juvenile scholars of Mr. Kafooze played with much zest at being a double-knock, at being a gentleman in a white hat, at being a gentleman with a gold-rimmed eye-glass, and, in particular, at being carriages and horses.

Lily had been hurried, but not unkindly, into the back bedroom, when the double-knock announced the arrival of the illustrious party. They were five in number. They were the Pilgrims, plus one; and the additional person was Mr. M'Variety.

"What do you want here?" was the countess's agreeable salutation to her director (she could not be amiable to everybody); "do you want to raise my salary?"

"Don't mind if I do," returned the enterprising manager. "You're certainly drawing. I wish everybody else did as well; but the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan, you remember, the Swedish Albino who used to do the Living Skeleton at Rosherville, and, as a child, was exhibited as the phenomenon with the words Princess Charlotte plainly visible on the pupil of one eye, and, on the other, Leopold of Saxe-Coburg—supposed to mean Saxe-Coburg—from whom I expected great things, has turned out a regular swindle. The confounded idiot has had the measles; and now he's got over them, he's getting quite fat and good-looking."

The countess had only heard the first few words of his remarks. Long before the manager had finished, she was engrossed by the conversation of her more aristocratic guests. How heartily she despised M'Variety in her secret self. What a vulgar, presuming, self-sufficient, under-bred fellow he was! But the rest? Ah, they were true gentlemen. How affable, and easy, and gracious was Milor Carlton. What a grand manner—and a kind one too, for all his dryness—had Sir William Long, Baronet. And Edgar Greyfaunt, the Sultan Greyfaunt, perfumed, and curled, and oiled, like a gorgeous potentate in Vathek, the sultan in a braided pelisse and a sealskin waistcoat. "Il a l'air grand seigneur, celui-là," she muttered. "C'est un hon pur sang. Il a un peu le ton Parisien. C'est peut-être un milord qui a flâné longtemps sur le Boulevard de Gand." And to Edgar she was especially gracious.

On Thomas Tattleshell, even, she smiled; but she took occasion to whisper to him:

"You never came this morning, false man. So you still bear malice?"

"Not a bit," returned Thomas, in the same low tone; "you gave me a deuce of a reception last night; snowballs and red-hot flat-irons, by way of a change, were nothing to it. However, that's all over now. I would have come this morning, but we were up late, and I was tired to death." Although Thomas was one of the most obliging of mankind, he had a reasonable sense of what was due to his dignity, and did not like to make himself too cheap.

"As you please," the countess rejoined,

turning away. "We will have our confidential talk another time." However nettled she might have been by Thomas's apparent neglect, she took care (for good reasons of her own, doubtless) not to show it then or there, and was studiously civil to him. "Messeigneurs," she continued, "can I offer you anything? The wines of South Lambeth are, I am afraid, not of the premiers crûs—the first vintages; but, if you desired it, the neighbourhood should be scoured to procure beverages worthy of you. Will you smoke, Messeigneurs? Illumine your cigars, by all means. I will not do you the injustice to suppose that I could offer you any so good as those which are in your cases."

The gentlemen hastened to disclaim any wish to resort to the deleterious practice she expressed herself willing to tolerate, and assured her that her conversation was already sufficiently delightful without any extraneous aids. By-and-by, Sir William Long gently suggested that she had made them, overnight, a certain promise.

"Ah," she returned, with seeming carelessness, "I know—my little girl. I promised to introduce her to you, did I not? It was a venturesome pledge on my part. Vous êtes par trop mauvais sujets, mes nobles seigneurs. However, you shall see that I can keep my word. Do you really wish to see the child? She is but a little bit of a thing, and quite timid and awkward."

"If she is half as charming as her mamma," Lord Carlton observed, gallantly, "she must be charming indeed."

"Flatterer! How do you know that I am her mamma? Ai-je l'air d'une mère, moi?" The vain woman plumed herself as she spoke. She was really beginning to imagine that she was young again. "But you shall see her. Excuse me for a few moments, and I will present her to you. You are sure that I cannot offer you anything?"

"Don't think you can," put in plain-speaking Mr. M'Variety. "'Tisn't very likely these gentle could drink the kind of stuff you would be likely to get from the public-house at the corner. If I'd only thought of it, now, I'd have brought a bottle of champagne in his lordship's carriage."

"With his lordship's permission," Mr. Tuttleshell gently hinted, in an under tone.

"With nobody's permission but my own, Mr. Tom Toady," the manager, who was quick of speech sometimes, retorted.

Thomas looked discomposed, and his lordship laughed. Mr. M'Variety's bluntness rather amused than offended him. It could certainly never be alleged against the enterprising manager that he was an adulator of the great. He was fond of the society of the "tiptoppers," as he called them, made much of them, and treated them with great liberality and hospitality; but he never cringed to or bowed down before them. He had often been known to swear at a lord who got in a carpenter's way behind the scenes; but it was difficult to be offended with

him: he swore so very good humouredly and respectfully. He was quite as affable and quite as hospitable in the society of the gentleman who contracted for the train oil to supply the lamps of Ranelagh, the inspector of police, and the tradesman who manufactured pork-pies for the refreshment-room.

Madame Ernestine went away into the next room; and poor Thomas had rather a hard time of it until her return. That unlucky observation about his lordship's permission brought on his head a number of cutting things. Mr. Greyfaunt was secretly delighted that the harmless client had been put down. Mr. M'Variety hastened, however, to smoothe Thomas's ruffled pinions.

"A right good fellow is Tom," he observed; "only he will put in his oar sometimes where it isn't wanted. Never mind, Tom; if I've hurt your feelings, I'm sorry for it."

It was difficult for Mr. Tuttleshell to be angry with any human being for more than five seconds at a time; and he was assuring M'Variety of his entire belief that he would do nothing willingly to wound his feelings, when the countess entered the parlour.

She brought Lily with her. She had some womanly grace and ingenuity left, this Wild Woman, and, during the few minutes she had been absent, had disposed some ribbons and scraps of lace about the girl's dress, which made her look quite smart. She was very pale, poor little Lily; but her soft brown hair and trusting eyes were beautiful.

"Merciful Heaven!" cried the baronet, starting up. "She's not a bit changed. It's only the dear little girl we saw at Greenwich grown into a woman."

But Lily had grown paler and paler. Flashes of crimson came, transient, across the deadly whiteness of her cheek. But she trembled all over, and stretched forth her hands before her as though her sight were failing her, and she was feeling her way. At length she gave a feeble cry, staggered, and would have fallen, but that the countess caught her in her arms.

"I thought so," she muttered between her teeth.

She bore her into the bedroom, poured water on a handkerchief, damped her forehead and chafed her hands. The girl soon revived. The countess bade her lie on the bed and keep quiet, and she would soon be quite well again. "Sly little imp," she muttered again, as she passed the sitting-room. "Ah, I thought so, I thought so. Thou couldst not deceive me, little Jesuit."

She found her visitors in great perturbation at the untoward occurrence.

"It is nothing," she explained. "I told you. She is a mere child, and has hitherto lived in virtuous retirement." She said this with a grin. "She was alarmed at the sight of so many strangers, but she is already recovered, and will soon be herself again. I was just as timid at her age." And she grinned again. She was not pleasant to look upon when she grinned. She strove to engage her guests in conversation;

but it manifestly flagged. She saw their eyes continually directed towards the closed door, and she hugged herself in her secret soul. She went into the bedroom once or twice, and came out saying that the patient was better, but too much frightened to confront the strangers again. And at last, with great amiability, but sufficient plainness, she told them that she had a rehearsal at the Gardens, and must beg them to excuse her until dinner.

"That's a crammer, whispered the enterprising manager to Thomas Tuttleshell; "there's not so much as a donkey rehearsing at our shop this morning." Whether his enterprise for the moment happened to be a playhouse, an Italian Opera, a garden, a circus, a giant, a dwarf, a concert-room, a chapel, or a wild-beast show, Mr. M'Variety always alluded to it as a shop.

"I suppose something's gone wrong," said Tom, in a return whisper, "and she wants to get rid of us. We'd better be off, Mac."

There was clearly nothing left but for the visitors to go. The countess's face was wreathed with smiles; but there was no mistaking the gesture with which she showed them the door. She bade them adieu until dinner, which was to take place, it was arranged, at some hotel in the West-end. Mr. M'Variety was to be of the party, and the manager whispered, as he passed out, that he had a proposition to make of a nature which might not be wholly displeasing to her. "Decidedly," she thought, "he means to raise my salary." Her views, however, were too ambitious, just then, to be satisfied with a mere two or three pounds added to her weekly stipend.

His lordship's Brougham would call for her at six o'clock. That was clearly as it should be, and another triumph. She was evidently resuming her proper station.

HOSPITALITY.

WHAT is hospitality?

I believe this to be a much more difficult question to answer than it appears at first sight. Our first idea of a hospitable person is of one who "keeps open house," as it is said, and is for ever getting his friends about him—a man, in short, with plenty of money, a good cook, and strong social instincts. Then, thinking a little more deeply, and pursuing the subject something further, you begin immediately to get into difficulties. You reflect upon such words as "hospital," and its tribe. You get your Johnson's dictionary and look up your subject. HOSPITABLE: Giving entertainment to strangers; kind to strangers. HOSPITABLY: With kindness to strangers. HOSPITALITY: The practice of entertaining strangers. Strangers, you think to yourself, always strangers. And then you ask yourself how many times your mutton has shed its gravy for the stranger, and the answer which you have to give is disheartening in the last degree. Bereft of comfort, you fall back upon derivations. HOSPI-

TALITAS: Entertainment of *friends*, or guests. This is much better. "Entertainment of friends" will do admirably. Nothing like going to the fountain-head. It is true that elsewhere the "fountain-head" issues waters which taste more bitterly to you, speaking of "hospes" as "a host that receives strangers." Here is the stranger turning up again. Altogether you are mystified and in doubt about it, and before long find yourself falling back upon the argumentum ad hominem, and looking out among your friends for cases of true and spurious hospitality.

And so you turn over your different friends in your mind, and ask yourself which among them has the reputation of being most thoroughly hospitable, and then, after but a very little reflection, you naturally bethink you of the Fingerglasses. Are they really hospitable, though? you ask yourself.

The abode in which these good people exercise the rites of hospitality is, in truth, never empty. Dinner-parties come off there oftener than in any other house in the square in which they reside; and besides these superb banquets, which are on a sufficiently magnificent scale, there are lots of little dinners consisting of a bit of fish, a curry, a leg of mutton and a pheasant, all which viands are of the highest order of merit. The Fingerglasses are always having company. The pastrycook supplies as many Nesselrode puddings to that house as to any in town, and it is a serious thing to think what the bill for champagne must come to in the course of the year. You never meet the head of that family in the street, but you feel that he looks bare and incomplete, from not having a white tablecloth spread out in front of him covered with plate, and flowers and glass, as on the occasion of the more solemn banquets, or adorned with a short-grained saddle of mutton, as on the snigger and less formal days of more limited hospitality.

But then comes the great question, Is this really hospitality? Who are the guests that surround this well-spread board, and for whom are those good things provided?

Does Mrs. Fingerglass—for she, after all, is at the bottom of all this hospitality—does she invite those among her friends who, she feels, stand the most in need of a dinner, or does she not rather solicit the presence of those who have already abundance of invitations, and who, if they had not, could very well afford to pay for their dinners themselves? It may be the result of accident that she knows such people, but somehow it happens that you meet none but successful men at Mrs. Fingerglass's. Does she ever ask Scalpel now, who is related to her by the mother's side, and who is using frantic exertions to make both ends meet in the up-hill career of a young doctor? She never asks him. It is not that she has any aversion to the medical profession, for Sir Sayle Rowley, Physician to the Queen, is a constant guest at the house. Does she ever invite Chopfall now? He used to be an old friend of the Fingerglasses, but he was thrown out by the failure of a certain specu-

lation which went to the deuce, and he has the greatest difficulty in living at all now. Does Mrs. Fingerglass ever ask these unprosperous, but virtuous, men—Scalpel and Chopfall? Nay, if you come to that, did she ever ask Vapours till lately, and till his new spring coal-scuttle won him notoriety?

The history of Vapours is rather a curious one, he being at once a man of fashion and a man of science. Some years ago, this anomalous individual managed to perform so successfully on wood and steel, as to produce a machine for cleaning the roads, which not only won the approval of government, but drew public attention towards the inventor, and caused him to be much sought after, and amiably dealt with by all sorts of people. When this flush of prosperity was his, he was naturally asked at once to the "hospitable" mansion of the Fingerglasses, where he was made much of, and where a small model of his road-scraper, which he presented to the Lady of the House, was, on intimate occasions, used for sweeping the crumbs off the table after dinner. Vapours went through all the stages of feasting provided by the house—from the banquet magnificent to the chop familiar—during the whole season. The next year he was let down altogether, not gently, but with a fierce and startling bump. His machine for cleaning the roads turned out ill in the long run, being so full of cog-wheels and main-springs, that the scavengers who worked it were always getting it out of gear, and such continual repairs became necessary, that at last the engine fell into disuse, and the name of Vapours into contempt. For several years Vapours was unable to rally, but he was working all the time, tilting the tea-kettle lid perhaps, like James Watt, or in some other way usefully employed. Meanwhile, he was invited no more by the Fingerglasses, and perhaps Sir Thomas Piston, the eminent engineer, who was an habitué of the house, and never approved of the presence of Vapours, may have put a spoke in his wheel, and exposed him as an unsuccessful man, and one not thought much of in "the Profession." Piston was an envious old impostor, and hated young men, and everything that they did.

The particular young man named Vapours was destined to become yet more odious than ever in the eyes of Sir Thomas Piston. At the commencement of a certain long winter, the new spring coal-scuttle burst upon the public and carried everything before it. It was a very brilliant thing, this coal-scuttle. It was placed in the side of the grate, and went up and down a shaft into the kitchen for replenishment. When you wanted more fuel on the fire, you had only to touch a spring near the bell, and if the scuttle were in good humour, a large supply of coals was instantly discharged into the grate. Sometimes, when the spring got out of order, the fuel would be cast forth with violence into the middle of the room, but this did not happen often, and the invention was a great success, and Vapours a great inventor.

Now, what does Mrs. Fingerglass do? How once again can she get possession of this long-neglected lion? She acts with shameless effrontery, and, utterly ignoring years of neglect, actually sends a message to Vapours through a mutual friend, wishing to know "What she has done that Vapours never goes near her; and if he has not altogether forgotten the way to her house, will he go and dine there, quite in a friendly manner, next Saturday?"

And now that we have ascertained what Mrs. Fingerglass does, let us next ask what Vapours does? (I know him well, and he told me himself all about it.) He went. He wanted change after the deep thought involved in his recent invention. He wanted to study the ways of the household, and see whether they really were such false people as some said they were. Besides, he was not going to bear malice. She was, after all, a very "hospitable" woman. Yes, he would go.

The fact is, he wanted to go. He wanted the silky luxury of the house. He wanted the good dinners, and the especial dishes and wines, for which this establishment was famous. He wanted to be seen there once again; and, above all, he longed after the praises and flattery which his host and hostess knew well how to bestow. Not a few of us are like this. Not a few clever individuals may be twisted round in a moment by delicate flatteries, and by such a mixed appeal to the vanity and the stomach as is made to those who frequent the Fingerglass establishment. Such persons rave and storm while they are neglected; laugh at the dupes who go to this house to which they (the neglected ones) are no longer invited; and curse the deceit and humbug which are practised there.

Presently the scenes shift, and our neglected friend gets up again in the social scale. To begin with, he is in such good humour in consequence of this circumstance, that he is ready to be on good terms with everybody. He says: "After all, the Fingerglasses have a right to ask whom they like to their house. They can't ask everybody. It may have been an accident that they were so often not at home when I called last year. The footman who made that announcement in such a cut-and-dried manner—it may have been, after all, *only* his manner. Mrs. Fingerglass certainly did not return my salute in the Park; but then, have I not continually heard her say that she is so dreadfully short sighted that she can never see any one?" [And here it is fair to remark, that persons suffering from this infirmity are in the habit of making it widely known that they are "so blind," as they call it, possibly with a prophetic eye to the future, and in order that they may be able *not* to see you in the street, should circumstances make it desirable.]

In seasons of prosperity, then, you are ready to make large allowances for the offenders who have treated you ill in adversity—at least, such are the sentiments of Mr. Vapours. That gentleman is also of opinion that it is very pleasant to be made a fuss with, and that there are *some* people who put you on such good terms with

yourself that you come back to them and their flatteries after any amount of previous neglect. I have no opinion of Vapours, but he is wanted in this illustration of doubtful hospitality.

"Do you know, Mr. Vapours," cries Mrs. Fingerglass, when Vapours enters the drawing-room on the occasion of this grand reconciliation scene—"do you know, that I've almost made up my mind not to speak to you? To be all this time without once coming near me!"

"But, I assure you," urges Mr. Vapours, "that I called very assiduously, and you were never at home."

"Impossible!" says the lady. "My people never told me that you had been. Did you leave a card?"

"Half a card-basketful," retorts Mr. Vapours, a little nettled.

"Then the servants must be to blame. I must positively speak to them about it. Servants now, you know," she adds, throwing up her eyes, "are such wretches. But I'm not going to scold you," she continues; "I'm too glad to see you, for that."

"Not going to scold him!" This was how she forgave Vapours, in the noblest and most charitable manner, for having been so long neglected, speaking as if she really believed he was in the wrong. It certainly was a triumph of humbug, but Mr. Vapours—who had just observed his new invention in the grate—fell into the deception as if it had been the most genuine thing in the world, and when Mrs. Fingerglass said, "To show you that I bear no malice, I shall expect you to take me down to dinner," he offered his elbow at once, and they descended the stairs together.

Lions were roaring all round the table. The man who had just written a series of letters to the Times, which was attracting much attention; the great traveller, who had published a successful account of his triumphs over wild beasts and wild men somewhere or other "up country;" the new artist, whose picture at the Royal Academy was the event of the year; the inventor, who had constructed a target which could defy any kind of cannon; the other inventor, who had made a gun which would perforate any target which had yet appeared; such persons as these were here as a kind of relief to the mere pecuniary or titled eminence of the remainder of the guests. Not one soul who was not remarkable for something—for his wealth, his rank, or his reputation.

Now let no one suppose for a moment that I am complaining of the worthy Fingerglasses for asking whom they please to their table. What I am in doubt about, is whether such entertaining ought to be called hospitality. If the Fingerglasses like to give a series of dinners to all these distinguished people, by all means let such banquets come off. If our friends like to show off their plate to persons who, having rival plate of their own, either despise the Fingerglass silver as inferior, or loathe the sight of it as superior, to their own, by all means let them do so. But call things by their right

names, and the right name for this kind of feasting is not hospitality. Call it an inclination to get your friends about you, a desire to have it said that such and such persons are seen at your table, call it sociability, call it ostentation, call it display—but do not call it hospitality.

But is nobody, then, hospitable? Is this virtue absolutely dead among us? Are we to look on the dark side of things only? Far from it.

In the house of my friend Greatheart—at whose house any man may be proud to visit, whose friendship any man may be proud to enjoy—at that house you meet guests of a different kind to those one encounters ordinarily, as just described, at the Fingerglass establishment. I do not say that you never meet with a clever or distinguished man at Greatheart's. Such persons appear in their turn, but certainly a large portion of the guests are of a class to whom a social meeting round a well-furnished dinner-table is something of a treat. Of course I do not mean that Greatheart asks the beggars out of the street to his table, but I do honestly believe that he is greatly guided in the choice of his guests by the thought that he will be doing good in some way or other to the person he invites. You may do good to people whom you ask to dinner in other ways besides the mere filling of their stomachs. A young man, for instance, cast loose upon London alone, will require, as a positive necessity of his nature, to have some opportunities of social intercourse, and if with his superiors, so much the better. You help to form the manners and habits of such youngsters by asking them to your house, besides aiding to keep them out of mischief.

It is useless to deny that Greatheart's wife's brother is little better than a death's head at a feast. This little man—he is old now, and many crosses have spoiled him—has probably made as utter a failure of life, as far as we outsiders can judge, as any person living. In all the different lines of business in which he has been started from time to time, he has invariably broken down. What was that attempt at print-selling, which was his last effort, but a hideous mockery? Who wanted those engravings after Ostade and Carl du Jardin, which this unfortunate man was always to be found—in the front parlour in Maddox-street—sticking down upon card-board? The room in Maddox-street was taken, and the stock of prints bought as a desperate venture, and the printed circular was sent out announcing that Mr. James Groves—which was the little gentleman's name—had on view a vast collection of rare and choice engravings, chiefly from the works of the old masters, to which the attention of connoisseurs and others was invited. Well, and who went to that room in Maddox-street? Did Sir Folio Porter go there?—he was the gentleman who gave three hundred guineas the other day for a Rembrandt etching, and there is a proverb in existence which designates very clearly the kind of persons whose money is soon parted from

them. Did Mr. Burin—who has the impression of the Burgomaster Sex, with the mark where the graver has slipped upon that magistrate's nose—did he become a frequenter of Mr. Groves's place of business? Did he purchase the Ostades in this magnificent collection? Alas, neither of these harmless lunatics—for no man in his senses would give three hundred guineas for a print—went near the place. It is true that to make up for this deficiency there were other persons who paid frequent visits to the front parlour before spoken of. Nothing could exceed the frequency of Mr. Lounger's visits to this establishment. This gentleman was in the habit of dropping in and having a pinch of poor Groves's snuff, and a dish of chat at all hours. He and Captain English (of the Militia) would spend hours in the front parlour, turning over the prints, and asserting that it was the finest collection in London. But did this pay? By no means. The unfortunate Groves was always behindhand, and was obliged to eke out his income by all sorts of honourable stratagems, into which we need not enter.

For this unprosperous gentleman there was always a cover at his brother-in-law's table, and it was the joy of the little man to sit there glowing with pride and satisfaction. He was generally silent himself, but he listened and enjoyed the conversation of others amazingly, and now and then would get a chance, when Greatheart turned the talk upon engravings and works of art, with a view to bring him out. The vendor of uncoveted prints worshipped his rich brother-in-law for this heavenly mercy, nor was there so much as a single grain of envy in that worship. Greatheart had been disinterestedly kind to him, and I suspect that you will rarely be disinterestedly kind to anybody without bringing such person to love and respect you. The sister of Greatheart's governess is another constant guest at the good man's table. This worthy lady, from having been once a tolerably prosperous miniature-painter, has been obliged to come down to the colouring of photographs. She gives all her ladies unexceptionable complexions, red lips, and languid eyelids with tremendous lashes, and gets something to do in this way, none the less that she always sends the portraits home entirely unlike the originals. Between this good lady—she is deformed—and Groves the unprosperous, there is kept up a great flirtation and habitual interchange of civilities, culminated occasionally by arguments on art of a very brilliant sort.

To give to people whose lives are so blank and desolate not only a handsome meal, but the change and—to them—the excitement of a feast, is to render them a service of a far higher order than at first sight appears. By such acts you not only reconcile them to their lot, but you soften their natures, you make them in turn more kind and gentle in their thoughts, and disarm of half its force that temptation to bitterness and repining, which is one of the most powerful that comes in a poor man's way.

This, at any rate, is hospitality, and that in

the highest sense of the word. That injunction by which we are bidden, when we make a feast, to call in the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, is (I think) to be taken as in some sort figurative. At the time when it was given, there would probably be one or two rich men in a town or settlement, and a crowd of poor and destitute. Rich men so situated and surrounded by the poor should give such banquets in these days, and in many cases they do so still. But to most of us, that command applies in a more figurative sense, and it seems to me that in Greatheart's case it is entirely carried out according to the spirit, if not the letter of the injunction. And in this, as in all other matters, the right thing answers. Greatheart spared a hundred mortifications which more ambitious and less hospitable hosts come in for. He does not find his lion engaged on the particular day when he wants to feed him, or indisposed at the last moment and unable to attend, or sulky and unwilling to roar. He does not feel that the eye of Gobble, who has a cordon bleu, is upon his salmi, and that *in* that eye is contempt. He has about him guests who neither laugh at him nor are jealous of him, and it may possibly happen that one day—we will not say when—he will come to know that in opening his house to such persons as we have spoken of above, he has done a better action than he ever imagined, and, looking for no such honour, anticipating no such reward, has entertained an angel unawares at his table.

THE BALLET.

AFTER a long and distinguished life, the ballet has died among us and gone to its grave, unhonoured even by a slight obituary notice. Once as much sought for in London as even that illustrious Italian guest the opera herself, ballet is dead and gone. Her revengeful ghost usually haunts some scene of every grand opera, or revisits the glimpses of the footlights where burlesque or pantomime usurps her inheritance. But though her ghost walks, she is dead; dead past all galvanizing into life again by the enterprise of opera directors. This was evident during the last opera season. And now, is not a sketch of her life due from the journalist to her ancient lineage and past distinction?

Ballet is descended, as her name shows, from those bands of worshippers who were said in the days of the Christian fathers "*ballare et cantare*," to sing as they swayed to and fro in dance before their heathen idols. The word *ballare*, which meant a measured swaying now to one side and now to the other, belonged to mediæval Latin, was adopted out of Greek, and was used chiefly by the Christian fathers of the Church to represent what they called the diabolical dance movement of Pagan rites. The word was taken purely into old French romance: as in the romance of Robert le Diable we read of one who now sings, now leaps, and sways to and fro, as one who "*puis chante, et puis espringe et bale*."

The mediæval Latin word became in Italian ballare, and in French baler. Thence the French bal, and its diminutive ballet. Thence also the word ballad, for the reason that may even yet be seen on a winter's night in the Orkneys, when country neighbours by the hearth join hands in a great circle, and, by dance movement of swaying to and fro together with varying emphasis, express the change of incident and emotion in the metrical tale, the ballad story, that one person chants to the measure all are marking.

But although a ballet is a little ball, in respect of its brevity, it has been high exalted among balls in respect of the artistic nature of its dancing. In fact, the young lady who should now, at a private ball, suddenly rear herself upon her toes, advance kicking, extend one of her legs at right angles to her body, and then stand on the smail of her partner's back, and, with outstretched arm, smile at the assembled company, would be regarded as a little too fast even for the present age. Even upon the stage this mere gymnastic exercise has much to answer for, to those who would explain the present ruin of the ballet. It belongs wholly, except in grotesque parts, to the period of the ballet's decline. In former days the better part of dancing, called the poetry of motion, was allied to music of its own, the prose of sound, and to the dumb show that should compress all Demosthenes into a gesture. A remote branch of the ballet family was developed in Italy, under the name of Art Comedy, out of the old Roman mimics; but in that Art Comedy, the dumb show, or expression through gesture and facial expression, went for more than the dancing and the rhythm. The family of entertainments afterwards so highly distinguished, is more immediately descended from a re-union of dance with speech and song, which took place in Italy early in the sixteenth century. And the ballet appeared thereafter as the little ball, when it was an incident of the great balls; for its place was not upon the public stage, but as a splendid and costly incident of private entertainments—a royal court or in the palace of a luxurious noble. The principal ballet-dancers were then kings and queens, and princes and princesses, and the corps de ballet was made up of grandees of the court. At the court of Turin there was a man especially famous for the planning of this sort of play; but the French, who adopted it from Italy, gave it the name and fame since current through Europe, and by them also it was advanced to a place of honour on the public stage.

Baltasarino, who was called Beaujoyeux, was a Pagnini of that sixteenth century, whom the Marshal Brissac recommended to the service of Queen Marie de Médicis. By him, under such patronage, the Italian ballet was introduced into Paris, where it was improved by Ottavio Rinuccini, another Italian, under the patronage of the same queen. The young ballet had also Cardinal Richelieu for a tutor and guide. Richelieu invented splendid effects, and engaged Louis the Thirteenth himself as a dancer in one of the

ballets at St. Germain. The greater Louis the Fourteenth was also an active ballet-dancer in his youth. It is said that when thirty-two years old he took seriously to heart a couple of lines in Racine's *Britannicus*—where it is said that Nero's singular merit was to dispute for prizes unworthy of his hands, to give up himself as a show to the Romans—and that King Louis never again danced in the presence of his subjects. What he may have done in his private chamber when he was alone and could take off his wig, there is no telling. In his later years, not even his most confidential gentleman of the bed-chamber ever saw Louis the Fourteenth with his wig off. When he went to bed, he retired within the enclosure of its curtains with his wig on, and the wig was then thrust out mysteriously from between their folds. In the morning the wig was as mysteriously returned, and, when the curtains were drawn, the royal figure-head over the royal night-dress corresponded to the stamp on the French coinage. But "the grand monarch" always loved the ballet, and spent lavishly for its decoration as one of the chief entertainments of his court. In his younger days, Benserade was the chief writer of words for the ballets.

The famous ballet-masters of his time were Chicanneau, Noblet, St. André, and Magnus. In the year sixteen 'sixty-nine Abbé Perrin, the poet, and his composer, Cambert, got the privilege for establishing a French opera, as an academy of music. The French opera was then actually established by the musician Lully and the opera poet Philip Quinault, who decorated his pieces to the utmost with dance and pantomime; so that it was he who first made the incidental ballet a recognised part of opera performance. Quinault, the son of a baker, had acquired in his youth the favour of Tristan the Hermit, who gave him lodging and board at his own table, and when he died, left Quinault a good legacy, wherewith he bought the post of valet de chambre to the king. Quinault's first dramatic piece, *The Rivals*, had been presented by his friend Tristan to the players as a work of his own, and was to be paid for accordingly. But, when the piece was found to be really the work of a youth of eighteen, the players wished to reduce by one-half their promise to pay, and at last agreed to pay the author a proportion of their takings; that is said to have been the beginning in France of the custom of the author's share in the success of his pieces. After that first success, Quinault wrote one or two pieces every year, but his best skill was shown in the lyric plays he wrote for Lully during fourteen years after the establishment of the French opera. Lully paid him liberally, and held to him closely. The king knighted and pensioned him. He had produced in *Armida* his best work, when the death of Lully and religious expectation of his own end caused him to stop short in his career, and he began a poem entitled *Heresy Destroyed*, by saying that "he had sung too much of sports and loves, and must attune himself to a sublimer strain;

to his tender muse he bade adieu; he bade her adieu for ever." That was the man to whom we owe what the bills call "in the course of the opera an incidental ballet," and the founding of the glories of the ballet on the operatic stage. His first lyric piece, *The Festivals of Bacchus and of Love*, he called a pastoral; but his *Triumph of Love*, presented at St. Germain in courtly fashion, and danced by the courtiers to Lulli's music, was formally called a ballet.

It is rather an odd fact that immediately after this time the only home of what was called the ballet was in the schools of the Jesuits, where, on great occasions, the pupils danced "*Ballets de Collège*," as grammar-school boys now-a-days give recitations. The ballets introduced into the operas were called *divertissements*, or *fêtes*.

After Quinault's death, in sixteen 'eighty-eight, the new path he had struck out for public entertainment was followed by weaker men, until, in sixteen 'ninety-seven, the second reformer of the ballet was found in Antoine Houdart de la Motte. He strengthened the dramatic interest in both ballet and opera, and, in the year just named, his first ballet opera, "*Europe Galante*," with Campra's music, established a new model for the French ballet of the next coming age. Young Louis the Fifteenth danced more than once in it at the Tuileries. The ballet-opera, as then constituted, consisted of a prologue and three or four acts, each with a well-defined action that included, and was illustrated by, one or two *divertissements* of blended dance and song. But the several acts, though they had unity of sentiment, did not develop one plot, and the ballet, as dance-work, had no independent place in such performance. In the last year of the seventeenth century Regnard planned to Campra's music a comedy-ballet of the Carnival of Venice, with detached carnival dancing introduced among the love intrigues forming the slight story of the piece. Then came La Motte's Carnival and Folly, in which heathen deities were set dancing. That was called an allegoric ballet. Another of his pieces gave occasion, through a slight story, to the dancing of shepherds, fauns, satyrs, dryads, in a pastoral ballet. Heroes and kings were next set tripping on the light fantastic toe in a heroic ballet. Advance now became rapid. In seventeen 'twenty-three Fuselier wrote, for the music of Colin de Beaumont, a play of Greek and Roman *fêtes*, in which he was the first to have the action of what story there was, told in

dance. In seventeen 'forty-seven appeared *Festivals of Hymen and of Love*, written by Cahusac to the music of Rameau, which added to a story told by dance, the use of wonderful effects of machinery; but the steps taken by these last improvers of the ballet did not lead to any great success.

The true creator of the later power of the ballet, as an independent entertainment, was Jean Georges Noverre, who wholly parted it from opera, shut the mouths of the dancers, and set the ballet very high on its own toes as a five-act play of music, dance, and pantomime. He wrote, a hundred years ago, two volumes, praised by Voltaire, of *Letters upon Dancing and Ballets*, and was that rare thing in creation—a male dancer with a head and brains. He danced well, and he wrote well about dancing. He went back to the study of the ancient pantomime; and of the stage ballet of the century last past, its action, its ingenious machinery, its careful grouping, he may be called the founder. He had Gardel and Vestris among his pupils.

The rest of the tale is of that which we have in our time seen. Who knows but there may be a chance for the revival in London of *Romeo and Juliet* as set by Vincenzo Saleotti! We have seen as queer things on the London stage. A genius apart was that of the Copenhagen ballet-master, Vincenzo Saleotti, who, in the present century, produced great pantomimic ballets, and gave, as an entertainment occupying a whole evening, the ballet of *Romeo and Juliet*; in which all is pantomime, and the actual dancing is confined to the ball-room scene; There *Romeo and Juliet* express their love and mutual attraction, by hopping about after each other among the dancers, and, being at last face to face, express everything in a tender *pas de deux*.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER IV. AN INTRODUCTION.

HANBURY came down pretty often to the barracks, and was esteemed "a good fellow." He brought his horse, he brought his guns—objects of absorbing interest to many beholders. They soon learnt that the gossips had given out the banns of marriage between him and one of the Manuels, and Young Brett, in his off-hand way, asked him openly.

"Well," said Mr. Hanbury, with an honest smile, "I am not at liberty to say much about it, but I hope it is not very far off."

Then they all spoke in praise of their looks; they were "fine girls," but the youths lamented their exclusiveness, and the cruel way they kept themselves "close."

To whom Hanbury, with all his simplicity, assuring the soldiers that this was all a pure misconception, and that foreign manners and foreign ways were at the bottom of it, and that, for his part, he fancied they would be rather glad to know people.

On which encouragement they burst into genuine raptures. "Fine creatures!" "Such eyes!" And the professors of military argot expressed their meaning in their slang, in which they were very fluent. "A stunner, by Jove!" "A clipper!" and with such rude admiration.

But he had not met Fermor since. Once he and the Manuels had passed by that wall, where Captain Fermor had swung his legs and held communion with his blunt pipe, but neither captain, nor captain's limbs, nor captain's pipe, were there. In short, as Captain Fermor said half aloud to Captain Fermor going to bed, when chafing and filled with disgust, "This comes of encouraging low people; the only barrier—and the more I see of life I am confirmed in this view—is a cold and steady resistance to any attempts at intimacy," and he had hoped that this would be a warning to him for the future.

But his mortification, whatever it was—and, indeed, it did not seem worth while looking back to—rankled in his mind, and, with a curious weakness, he thought if he could only get a fair opportunity of publicly stropping his razor on his enemy, his peace of mind would return, and there would be a salve for his honour.

That none but gentlemen should be admitted into the army; that, as at present constituted, it was sadly overrun with creatures of low extraction; that it soon would be "no place" for a man of refined feelings and good birth, was the substance of a meditation which passed through Captain Fermor's mind as he went out one evening to lounge—scarcely to walk. It was summer, and it was fine, and though the roads were more green lanes than roads, especially where a hedge opened out in a sort of hawthorn window, and showed the sea far away glistening tranquilly, still never was the provincialism of the place so rank in his nostrils. He came past his favourite seat on the wall—foresworn now for some ten days—sat down on it, and fumed away afresh at the place and all its works.

After half an hour or so, he heard voices, and three figures came past him very gaily, a gentleman and two ladies. "Natives" he assumed them to be, not worth a thought beyond a pettish protest that even in these backwoods, whose merit, at least, should be privacy, it was hard (but quite in character) that one could not get a moment without intrusion.

These were, however, the two ladies of Raglan-terrace and Mr. Hanbury. The face of the elder and taller seemed to flash on him, like the strong light of the sun, which had set but ten minutes; that of the youngest so soft, so rich in colour, with strange, full eyes, to absorb and draw him as he looked. For the moment he forgot his grim Fakir creed of indifference. Beside the two faces, the third, genial and good as it was, seemed as of a low clown.

The "low clown" called "How d'ye do?" to him very heartily.

The three drifted by. Fermor thought how, after all, they must be "low," coarse people, at least, when they could "take up" with such—But here was the low clown but a few yards away, turning back irresolutely, and coming to him. Fermor's lip curled with hostility.

"I say," said Hanbury, "I must introduce you. It is too absurd, this sort of thing. Come now!"

To him, in a sort of haughty alarm, Fermor replied,

"Excuse me—most kind of you—but—"

"Hush!" said the other, looking back. "You see I have told them. It will appear so rude. You couldn't, I am sure—"

Fermor dropped from his wall, half impatient, half pleased—impatient of the gaucherie which this awkward fashion of introduction must bring about, pleased at this one more instance of a universal homage.

"This is Captain Fermor," said Hanbury, taking him by the arm, "our friend that we have known so long, and yet haven't known. Ha, ha!"

Fermor gave his calmest, saddest, Town bow, from long training exquisitely graduated to the suitable inflection of homage. Rustics might strive in vain after such manners.

They walked on together. The elder girl spoke in a voice firm and musical; but it was decided in key.

"Mr. Hanbury is right," she said; "we do know you, and we have talked of you."

Fermor smiled. He took out his humility mask (for he carried all his "properties" in his pocket), and said,

"What time misspent, I fear! What useful moments abused!"

(A good stroke, that would have filled the social pit and boxes on a crowded Town stair with wonder and delight.)

"Ah!" answered the elder girl, "but we have so little to talk of here."

This was the result of the effect on her, and the captain looked at her suspiciously. But on the younger it had clearly produced the right Town effect, for she was looking up with a compounded feeling of half awe and half surprise.

There is always a process of election. Even on meeting people but for ten minutes, preference of some kind, even the most superficial, there must be; and so Captain Fermor chose the younger girl on the spot, as being softer and, above all, more *reverent*.

They walked together for a half hour, four in a line. But Captain Fermor was the officiating minister of that little congregation. He preached the sermon, they listened devoutly. He had some tact in the management of the common counters of talk, and could shift and change his bits of foil with the skill of a conversational juggler; at least his bits of wit were so new to his company, that there was, at least, the element of curiosity.

There were a few topics at which they had been looking through, mere pastoral—or rather say provincial—glasses, and for which he now lent them his more worldly lorgnette. In a gentlemanly way he lifted his eyes and sneered mildly, yet not ill natpreditly, at what was about them. He worked the *ro eye* plentifully. He put his personality through all moods and tenses for them.

Yet presently he began to see that his little arrows were shooting past the elder girl. He said, "They persecute me to know this person and that. I declare, if you were to know all I suffer, and the worry I have to endure—But I don't want it. In Town, of course, there I lay myself out for it—I got interest for

my money. In fact, I'm a different better altogether. But here I have made it a sort of rule. If you don't draw the line somewhere, you know—" When he had got so far, he found the eldest Miss Manuel saying something in a low voice to John Hanbury.

But there was reverence in the large eyes of the softer girl which indemnified him. He remarked, too, with a sort of pleasure, how beside him on this occasion "that boor," as he christened him, seemed to sink down into a lower Yahoo sort of grade. Among corresponding Yahoos, i.e. at Mess, such might have a sort of elevation, but on a proper ground it would be different. It was so, indeed, to a certain degree. He artfully kept the talk upon the higher social tablelands, where Hanbury could scarcely breathe, and he really contrived to be amusing—because half biographical—on the topic of Town parties and dinners, and some notable men whom he had met. Hanbury the honest, the admired, was almost reduced to silence. Fermor, too, had not forgotten the "outrage," as he considered it, on "that boor's" part, and several times when Mr. Hanbury struck in with some rough and hearty, and, perhaps, too universal a choir of praise, he quietly, and with the half superiority of pity, set him right.

The elder Miss Manuel did not seem to take so much interest in this exhibition. She presently broke in on the personal current of Captain Fermor's life (he was giving them a sort of psychological analysis, "No one *quite* understands my mind," he said, with his agreeable smile, as if speaking of another person altogether. "Some think me proud, some say I am so indifferent; but neither of these classes know me really. It would take years of study to know me properly—one side of my character, even—and even then, &c."), and it was just at this point, not, however, rudely, and in the middle of a sentence, that Miss Manuel struck in eagerly: "Well, about the Baron—do tell us? I am dying to hear."

This was an opening for John Hanbury to ride in on his great horse, which he did with a genuine ardour and enthusiasm. It was like the fresh air of daybreak after the candles and hot close vapours of a ball-room.

"To be sure," he said. "I know you will be all interested to hear of the Baron. He is down for a little training—down at Bardsley—out every day on the downs. Had a letter to-night about him. Sure to carry all before him. There won't be such a horse in."

The two sisters looked eager: even the softer faced, who had stayed a few seconds behind with Fermor's psychology, was now busy with the Baron.

"Nice darling creature!" she said, with a sort of dreamy rumination.

"Fine old fellow!" said John, taking a different view of him. "And he shall have the honour of carrying you the day before, to give him an artificial courage."

"O, shall he!" said she, the round eyes swimming in pleasure. "How I shall enjoy it. We must go. O, Pauline! we must see. Surely mamma would not mind just for once."

Thus was Captain Fermor and the analysis of his mind left leagues behind. He had misgivings that, after all, these might prove "low" people too. But the true source was the incurable lowness of "that boor," which was breaking out in this lawless way. He thought how he must make an example of him; how with such there was no keeping terms. But the horse, now introduced, was hard to struggle against. Even the soft, the round-eyed devotee was drawn away. He said to her, in a low confidential voice, "You have been in Town, I am sure you have—"

But with an absent smile she answered him, "O yes!—that is, not for ages." Then to Hanbury: "And when will he arrive, the Darling? I am longing to see him again."

"On Monday," said Hanbury, with the same eagerness. "I saw him yesterday, his coat shining like a looking-glass—such a stride; and when I took him over a stiff fence, he cleared it like a furrow. O, he will do," said John Hanbury, rubbing his hands with delight.

The two girls' faces were turned to him with wonderful interest, that of the elder girl with a sort of pride in Hanbury himself, the younger with an interest that seemed to travel away to where the noble brute was in his paddock. For the moment no one was taking thought of the refined Fermor. He smarted under it.

"This horse," he said to Hanbury, with bitterness, "seems to be about the most distinguished person of his time. You all appear to be absorbed, to live, move, and have your being in him." And he gave a sort of smile athwart the two ladies. But John answered him with simplicity, quite pleased that he too was interested in the matter.

"I am," he said, "absurdly so. To tell you the truth, there are one or two nights that I have not slept for thinking of it. You must know I have been foolish enough to put a good deal of money on him; more indeed than I like. You'll think me very absurd?"

"This 'low' horse again," thought Captain Fermor, and answered with exquisite satire, "Well, if you put it to me so directly, I must say yes!" and he looked for the applause which the stroke must extort. The bright flashing face was cold and impassive, and turned towards him with steepliness; that of the younger was waiting shyly, with a half smile of curiosity, to hear more. A good opening for a handsome exit off the stage. He made his bow, calling in Lord Chesterfield. "Sorry," he said, "must really go now. Have to be in barracks. So glad to have had the pleasure, &c."

John Hanbury wrung his hand awfully. "Don't you like them?" he whispered, as he walked away a few steps with him. "You saw how interested she was about the horse. The

fact is, I have set my heart on winning this race. And with the race, *old boy*," he added, with a hearty and dreadful familiarity that made Fermor's blood curdle, "I shall win something else! I must tell you *I think it is all right*—you understand—the Younger one. Don't tell any fellow, though. Good-by."

Now as Captain Fermor lifted his hat to the two ladies, the idea before his mind had been that he had happily lowered their respect by a sort of contrast. So he naturally thought, with something like disgust, of the whole of the scene. "How they can put up with that boor's insufferable coarseness! It jars on me at every turn. And how *she* can! If she was dressed properly, and trained under good hands, she might do—in Town." And Captain Fermor thought of the soft liquid eyes, and that pleased expression of curiosity as he talked. "All to be thrown away on that low boor."

That low boor and the two ladies walked home together; but they were more silent than usual. "By the way, what do you think of Fermor?" he said.

"He is very well," said the elder; "quite the common run of exquisite. We know as much of him now, as we ever shall."

"But he seems to know the world so well," said the younger girl, timidly.

The other's eyes flashed, and she laughed.

"How well *you* know the world, to tell us that, Violet. I should never ask to see him again, and if Mr. Hanbury is wise, he will never inflict him on us again."

Mr. Hanbury looked mystified. "Why so?" he said; "would not that be rude?"

"Because we know him," she said. "And there is nothing more to know of him; he is conceit all over, and of the most foolish sort."

"He is a little fine," said John, reflectively.

"If you take my advice," said Miss Manuel, meaningly, "for your own sake as well as for ours, you will spare us his company."

"But he will amuse us," said the younger sister, doubtfully. They were at their own door, and she went in first. The elder girl stayed behind a little with Mr. Hanbury. It was nearly dark. The stars were out, and down at the little port the lighthouse newly lit was twinkling.

"Why did you do that?" she said to him.

"He is a cold, heartless London creature. It makes me uncomfortable to be in his society. He says he wants amusement here, and who can tell *how* he may find amusement. You know you have called me the wise woman before now, and I tell you I can read character, *and he don't like you*. So, my dear honest John Hanbury, we will leave him where he is."

John Hanbury went his way home that night thinking very deeply. He respected and admired Miss Manuel, so her words impressed him. "She sees things where I don't," he thought, and there certainly was a "nasty" bitter manner in Fermor towards him.

CHAPTER V. A VISIT.

A WEEK after, not very far from Raglan Villa, Fernor and he met. Hanbury was going away for a day, to be back in the morning. "Were you going to see the Manuels?" asked John Hanbury, bluntly.

"How abrupt you are," said the other, smiling; "you quite affect the nerves. I called there yesterday, so it would be a little too soon, would it not?"

"I have just been there," said the other; "but am going away now, to see about the horse, but shall be back to-morrow."

The first thought of Captain Fernor was, "What on earth does this fellow tell me his plans for? As if I care whether he goes or returns to-morrow." The second was, that possibly there might be a fair and open arena, happily secured from interruption—this boor always hanging about the place, and thrusting his stupid presence perseveringly on these ladies. He thought this over several times, put on some elegant decoration, and, about five o'clock, sauntered up to Raglan-terrace.

He went in. There were in the drawing-room Mrs. Manuel, who "had been handsome," and the younger daughter. It was the entry of a disguised prince into the villager's cabin. It was exactly the little stage he delighted in, and the audience he would have chosen. Mrs. Manuel was a woman of silent and depressed manners, a little shy, perhaps, with suffering of some sort. For him it was like a little circus in which his personality might go round and round. He thought to himself how—as a mere exercise for his faculties, now long rusted by disuse—he would show them the difference between true and trained refinement, and that dull common stuff they had had to bear with of late. He really excited himself, sitting on a low chair; and from that, as from a little pulpit, gave out his monologue. He was entertaining. He aired all his properties. He took his mind, as it were, into his hand, and showed it round. "This is where I differ from other men. The common fellows, that we meet in the drawing-rooms, they can speak but can't talk. Now I can talk but I can't speak. I wish I could. I envy those creatures, upon my word I do. I suppose if I laid my mind to it I could. If I chose to talk upon, say horses, I suppose I could ring the changes on horses as well as another—pasterns, curbs, and the rest of the jargon. But I don't want to. I ride a horse out in the open air, not in the house, you see!"

Two smiles on two faces; one, though, a little doubtful, welcomed this sally. Just then entered, as she always did, with a flush, the taller Miss Manuel. She looked at him with a sort of hostile inquiry.

It made one more for the audience, and Fernor, turning himself in his pulpit, went on. "Now there's your friend Mr. Hanbury. We know him so well, no better person breathing, but he has his line; and what I like him for, he feels it,

and don't try and travel out of it. When he talks as we have heard him, about that horse of his, over and over again. It is very pleasant to hear it, because, you see, it is nature. Now you see, I can't manage that sort of thing. I suppose I know a horse as well, at least, as most men, and, perhaps, can ride one a great deal better than many; but then I can't put it in so dramatic a way—I can't indeed!" and Captain Fernor smiled pleasantly. He felt he was getting more fluent every moment. The large soft eyes were fixed on him.

Miss Manuel struck in. "I hope he will long keep that dramatic power, as you call it. I hope he will never exchange it for the false affections of fashion. I don't see much good brought by them. I hope not—never!" She spoke this a little excitedly.

Captain Fernor shrugged his shoulders. "You know your friend better than I do. I don't pretend to say how he will turn out. I can't lay my mind to that sort of study. I wish I had time."

Violet gave a little titter. She could not help it. It was a titter of approbation.

"His is a fine open manly character," said her sister, her face beginning to flush, "that *couldn't* be worthy of all study. If he does talk of one subject, if he is proud of his horses, it is a manly English taste, the taste of English gentlemen. Some of the English lords are on the turf, are they not? I can tell you it requires some courage to ride a steeple-chase."

She was walking up and down in this excited manner, working up gradually to something like anger. Her sister seemed to feel this, for she made a low protest: "O, Pauline!" The other stopped suddenly and said:

"Captain Fernor, are *you* going to ride in this race?"

He was smiling and twisting his hat between his knees, like a globe, two lavender fingers being the pivots. "Why, I believe not," he said. "Not but that I should like it. Some of our people will ride, which I am very glad of. It will give the rusties here a lesson. None of them know how, not one; they will learn something, if they have the sense to profit by it."

"But Captain Fernor, it seems, is not to give the lesson."

He coloured a little.

"We," she went on, "have all been brought up to admire these manly sports, even when there is risk and danger; we respect them, and we hope *our* champion shall win. Don't you, Violet?"

The door opens, and enter now John Hanbury, who stopped as he saw Captain Fernor. "Why," said he, "I thought you were—"

The other waited coldly for him to finish. "Yes?" he said.

"I mean, I did not think you were coming here."

"You have just arrived in time," said Miss Manuel. "Captain Fernor has been ridiculing, I may say—"

"Pray, pray!" he said; "you *do* use such ugly unpleasant words."

"Sneering at dangers he has reasons for not encountering himself—at our horses, and our races, and race-course, and the rustics who are to ride, but don't know how."

John Hanbury, who had been reflective, and even moody, since he entered, coloured a little.

"We shall have some of *your* friends in, shall we not? Well, the rustics shall try and show them what they can do."

"O, as for that, you must recollect when a man has been a whole course of Goodwood, and the Derby, and Ascot, and a hundred such things, these local affairs must seem a little poor. Of course every allowance must be made. But you know even the course——"

"Why not try it?" said honest John Hanbury, with something really like a sneer. "Well, never mind, wait for the day."

"Yes, wait for the day," said Miss Manuel. "Our horse shall win, and our champion. We have 'backed' him—is not that the word—heavily."

The younger girl caught some of this enthusiasm. "We *must* win."

"I shall win," said John Hanbury, looking at her with a sort of pride, "or—or break my neck in a ditch. I shall deserve it."

"Don't speak in that terrible way," said the two together. "But do tell us about the Baron;" and both drew over with him towards the window, quite absorbed in him and the subject, and forgetful of other persons.

Captain Fermor, still twisting his hat on the little low chair, looked after them bitterly. "Second class, ill-bred people, after all," he said to himself. "Just, indeed, what I might have expected. This is what invariably comes from stepping out of one's position." And rising, he prepared to take a formal leave: "I am sorry," he said, with calm sarcasm (afterwards it was balm to him to think with what Roman dignity he had departed), "I am sorry to interrupt, even for a moment, your discussion of this *interesting* subject," and, with his voice, he as it were put in italics the word interesting. On the younger girl's face there was a sort of appeal, or beseeching protest.

He was one of the most sensitive creatures in the world, laughably so, and he went his way chafing. He would give anything, he thought, for a horse this race, just to show them how calmly, and even elegantly, a true gentleman could ride in to victory, in the face of all dangers. He liked to map out for himself little schemes of polite vengeance, and make for himself gorgeous pictures of triumph; he victorious, bores beaten, shouts of joy, and then, *this* would be the retribution: when all were pressing forward, to cover *that* family with confusion by a calm overlooking—without pique, of course, which would be the way with vulgar, untrained people.

It was natural that in that little assembly the first topic should have been Fermor.

"There! I feel warmth again," said Miss Manuel, walking backwards and forwards. "I am glad he is gone. There is something so false and heartless about his manner."

John Hanbury was silent for a moment. "I don't think he is so naturally; but he has trained himself into that odious stiffness."

"It is all, thrown away on us," said Miss Manuel. "We are two simple creatures. All his attitudes and cold refinements are quite wasted."

"What amused me," said John Hanbury, "was his holy horror of poor horses. I suspect a steeple-chase would be too rough and coarse a style of amusement for him."

The younger girl made no criticism on the absent "fine" Captain Fermor. He soon passed out of their talk.

But they knew very little of "fine" Captain Fermor when they set him down as shy about horses. In England, the rough jousts of the hunt do not disarrange a fold in the delicately moral cambric which the exquisite wears. Dandy Guardsmen did well at Waterlooo. Fermor, putting his foot into the stirrup, left all his affectations and ess-bouquets on the ground in a heap. In the saddle there was another Fermor. But he had not been seen to hunt this season. He was cramped in means, and could not support the charge of hunting-horses.

He thought it over with many a curl of the lip. The prospects of overwhelming foes, friends, "boors" and all, by a dashing victory, was very pleasing to feed on. But he presently dismissed it. "*She*," said he to himself, "saw the true metal!" And again he thought what an effect those large swimming, absorbing-like, two deep lustrous little lakes would produce on the proper stage—a London stage—if she were suitably drilled, as it were, and refitted, and brought out to see under the care of, say Lady Mantower. "To be thrown away on that boor!"

AN EXHIBITION OF ASSES.

OF all the animals that came out of the ark, the donkey is the least considered by the master whom he serves so patiently and so well. The poor beast seems to have shared the curse with Ham, and to have been banned from the beginning. We may, without incurring the charge of irreverence, imagine that Noah had a great deal of trouble with him; that he was the last to be got into the ark, and the last to be got out of it; that while Shem ascended to the back of the stately elephant, and Japhet mounted the graceful horse, Ham bestrode the humble ass, and man and beast went forth into the wilderness together, to be slighted and despised.

Buffon and Cuvier both thought that the donkey was despised only because he cut a sorry figure by comparison with the horse, and that if the latter were unknown the donkey would have had great care lavished upon him, and thus have increased in size and developed his mental powers to an extent almost impossible to imagine.

Adopting this theory, we must regard the donkey as the victim of an invidious and odious comparison. But with all respect for Buffon and Cuvier, I am inclined to think that there are other causes for the contempt which attaches to this animal. At the very outset of his career he laboured under the great disadvantage of not being "good looking." We all know how a defect of this kind affects even the destiny of man. Hunchbacks, and cripples, and misshapen persons are not, as a rule, the special pets of society, but rather the contrary. Natural disposition, too, is a most important element in the account. By nature the donkey is humble and patient, susceptible of strong attachments, and contented with the smallest of mercies, and for this reason he is "put upon." It is the same with the human animal. When a man is patient, and humble, and contented with little, he is almost invariably the butt and the drudge of others. Every one is acquainted with some big-headed, ungainly, meek, easy-tempered, human donkey, who runs errands, lends money, amuses children, hangs pictures, sees old maids home, sleeps on the shake-down, goes outside the omnibus in the rain to oblige a lady, and generally does everything he is asked to do by his sharper and more selfish neighbours. This is pure good nature, but clever people who profit by it call it, in the fulness of their gratitude, stupidity. The meek and mild character always invites contumely and ill usage. If the horse commands more respect than the donkey, it is not because his character is more amiable, but because he inspires more fear. Thus the world will always have a higher opinion of the ruthless warrior who conquers with sword and flame, than of the mild apostle of peace who goes about quietly and unobtrusively seeking to do good.

But the donkey has a physical defect—a defect which is never forgiven in either man or beast. He is little. To be meek of mind and short of stature is a terrible combination of misfortunes. It is a hard thing even for a great mind to maintain its true importance and dignity in a small body. The great Napoleon did not escape the reproach of being little. If you want to take him down a peg in your imagination, think of him as the "Little Corporal," or even as the little man in imperial robes, who pulled his favourites' ears at Fontainebleau. We had a remarkable illustration of the disadvantage of short stature the other day, when a beardless boy got up in the House of Commons, and ridiculed a veteran minister whose name is associated with the greatest reforms of modern times, by merely reminding the intelligent audience that he was barely five feet high.

I am sorry that my philosophy should have led me to use a cabinet minister as an illustration bearing upon the condition of the donkey race; but the analogy was obvious, and truth must be pursued sternly. I come, then, to the conclusion, that the low regard in which the donkey is held, and the insults and injuries which are heaped upon him, are owing to three causes

—to his being meek, and patient, and easy-tempered; to his not being "good looking," and to his being little.

Considering how the ass has had, during his history, to bear up against one or other of his defects, it is really a marvel that the race has managed to survive to this day. His career from first to last has been a very chequered one indeed. There were periods in ancient times when he was regarded with some favour, and treated with some consideration; but at no period does he appear to have been entirely exempt from reproach. In Jerusalem he was the favourite pony of the upper classes and the priests. Deborah describes the greatest men in Israel as those who rode upon white asses, and we are told that Abdon, a judge of Israel, had forty sons and thirty grandsons who rode on seventy asses. Nevertheless, those Israelites, although they were proud to ride on asses, considered them unclean beasts; and to yoke an ass with an ox in the same team was an offence against the law of Moses. The Persians, the Tartars, and the Romans, held the ass in high esteem, it is true, but only when he was cooked. Olearius affirms that he saw thirty-two wild asses slain in one day by the Shah of Persia and his court, and that the bodies were sent to the royal kitchen of Isfahan. Haunch of wild ass roasted was a favourite dish with the Roman epicures; but their maxim was, to say nothing good of an ass unless he was dead. They had no regard for him when alive, and thought it a very bad omen to meet one on the road. The Egyptians entertained a fierce hatred towards the ass, and regarded it as a symbol of all kinds of misfortune. They were the first to symbolise a stupid person by the head and ears of an ass. When the Romans sought to bring contempt upon the Jewish religion they trumped up a story about an ass's head having been found in the sanctuary of the Temple. It was a wicked story in every sense; but the Jews were greatly annoyed at it. They would have forgiven anything but a *donkey's* head. Thus in every age and in every country the ass has been despised, and consequently ill used, on one score or another; but for no other real reason, I take it, than that he is too patient and gentle of disposition, and too insignificant in size to assert himself and command respect. The condition of an animal suffering from such undeserved misfortunes has high claims upon the active humanity of the present time; and it was therefore but a matter of course that after the dogs and the horses, the donkeys should have an opportunity of forming themselves into a great exhibition at the Agricultural Hall.

The recent mule and donkey show may be regarded as the first competitive examination of the pupils of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Donkey-drivers, who had for years been receiving lessons in humanity from the officers of the society, came up to show what progress they had made in the art of persuading donkeys to do their work without the argument of the stick. Prevention has, no doubt,

done much, but it is reasonable to expect that encouragement will do more; for this show rewards, while the society only punishes.

One hundred and twenty-five animals were entered for the show, and though some of the most notable specimens were sent by distinguished personages, the great majority were the property of very undistinguished personages, viz. costermongers and chimney-sweeps. When it is remembered that the show continued for four days, during which time the exhibitors were deprived of the services of their animals, it will be readily understood that it was no easy matter to bring so many of them together. It was, of course, necessary to indemnify the owners of the donkeys for their loss of time; and in some instances to persuade them that the promoters of the show meant them no harm. But when this had been accomplished by the tact and energy of Mr. Douglas, the manager, the costermongers entered into the affair heart and soul, and seemed to be quite alive to the humane object of the exhibition. The lower classes are usually rather suspicious of the patronage of great folks; but on this occasion they found the great folks and themselves, as regards mules and donkeys, on the same footing. The Prince of Wales and the costermonger exhibited their donkeys side by side; and if the stall occupied by the prince's donkey was rather smarter in its appointments than some of the others, was not the stall occupied by the mules of Mr. Tom Sayers quite as smart? And while the ass-cloth belonging to the prince was marked with three feathers and the letters P. W., were not the mule-cloths of Mr. Sayers embroidered with the letters T. S., a garter, a lion rampant, and a figure of Mr. Sayers himself, stripped to the waist, and standing in an attitude of self-defence? Princes, earls, prize-fighters, and costermongers were all, for this occasion at least, simply exhibitors of mules and donkeys.

The donkeys and mules exhibited by the "swells" were, of course, pets, who fared sumptuously every day, were regularly washed and cleaned and currycombed, and had never, perhaps, done a day's work in their lives. The prince's donkey, Vicar, may have once tasted a thistle, as Brummel once tasted a pea, and as Lord Brougham once ate a fourpenny dinner in the New Owl. And he looked like a donkey who would say, with the view of making less fortunate donkeys contented with their position, that he never enjoyed anything so much in his life. He was evidently, however, a donkey who, as regards thistles, was not permitted to indulge his predilection. It was to be expected that all the pets would look well, and they did, but it was not to be expected that some of the working class donkeys, the "mokes," accustomed to drag fish and vegetables about the streets all day, and to be ridden within an inch of their lives on Hampstead Heath, should look equally as well. But they did. Indeed, on the whole, I think the costermongers' donkeys were the handsomest in the show; and, judging from the sleekness of their coats and the soundness of

their knees, they appeared to have been well taken care of and kindly treated. The affection which their masters lavished upon them in presence of the humane public was most delightful to witness. Great hulking fellows with beetle brows, bullet heads, and deeply scarred cheeks, were seen handling their donkeys with the greatest tenderness, gently smoothing their coats, patting them on the back, and even embracing and caressing them. Going round from stall to stall, and seeing affection welling so liberally from such unlikely fountains, I should not have been surprised if I had come upon the long-promised exhibition of the lion and the lamb reclining together on terms of the most perfect amity. Not an improper adjective, not a sound of a blow to be heard! Had Mr. Douglas thrown some spell over those costers, or was it a dream of the good time coming? In genteel accents, and in a tone of quiet philosophy, I heard two gentlemen, in the very narrowest of corduroys, the very wispiest of neckerchiefs, and the greasiest of caps, set upon heads displaying all the generally received developments, natural and accidental, of ferocity, thus conversing:

"I should not wonder, William, if this here show would do a great deal of good in preventing cruelty to animals."

To which William replied, "I have no doubt of it, Joseph; and it's just the thing as is wanted, for the way in which some fellows treats the poor beasts is shameful!" And Joseph, as showing his reprobation of the conduct of such inhumanity, put his arms round his donkey's neck and demonstratively embraced the animal. I concluded that William and Joseph were of those exemplary persons who, when they have donkeys that won't go, disdain to proceed to the extremity of whalloping, but, instead, give them some hay and some straw, and incite them to action by a mild "Gee-up!"

It is worthy of remark that the donkeys were all in much better condition than their masters. Regarding them both as pure beasts, any one desiring to possess a specimen, would have infinitely preferred the donkey to the man. But this, after all, was a compliment to the men, for they had lavished all their care upon their donkeys and bestowed none upon themselves. Best clothes and clean faces had not been thought of. They came from their work "just as they were," and though there was a great show of linen, it was occasionally displayed in quarters where it is usual, in other society, to conceal it most scrupulously. This circumstance, together with the complete indifference to their own appearance, manifested by nearly all the men, suggested to my mind that after the donkeys have had their turn, it would not be a bad thing to have a show of costermongers.

After witnessing so many evidences of care and kindness bestowed upon the poor donkey, it was most gratifying to me to be present at the distribution of prizes on the last day of the show. One by one, as their names were called out; the men entered the arena with their animals, and advanced to the

table to receive their prizes. One carried off a silver cup of the value of ten guineas (which he declared would be many times filled and emptied, too, before the night was out); another, a crisp new five-pound note, which he handled not exactly in the manner of a bank-clerk; a third, four golden sovereigns; a fourth, two pound ten, looking quite an enormous sum in virtue of its being partly in silver and wrapped up in brown paper; a fifth, one pound, and so on, down to five shillings. I should not omit to mention, that one of the donkeys that received a prize was forty years old. For the best part of that time it had worked hard, brought up a large family, and never once been chargeable to the parish. At an agricultural show in Bucks, that donkey might compete with any old man in the county. By the way, the extreme age of this animal—looking none the worse for its years—suggested to me that the reason why no one ever sees a dead donkey, may be that they never die, but survive from generation to generation.

Without being very demonstrative in their politeness—it is not easy to touch your hat when you are holding a donkey with one hand, and two pound ten, partly in silver, with the other—the costermongers all seemed perfectly satisfied with their prizes, and cheered right heartily again and again when the chairman mentioned the name of an excellent lady—there present—who had been one of the most active and generous promoters of the show.

So far, the exhibition was in all respects highly gratifying, both as an evidence of good that had been attained, and as a promise of greater good to be attained in the future. But unfortunately for my favourable impressions, I lingered for some time in the Hall, and witnessed the grand finale—which was an exhibition of donkey-racing. The proverbial rule of the donkey race-course is, that the hindmost wins; but that was not the rule on the present occasion. A heavy, long-legged costermonger, and a great hulking sweep, got upon two poor animals, much too small to carry them, and endeavoured to urge them round the ring by tugging at their mouths, and kicking them in the ribs with their heavy hobnailed boots. The managers of the show had considerably forbidden the owners of the donkeys to bring sticks or whips with them; but the donkeys enjoyed no exemption from blows on that account. As they were unwillingly urged round the arena, they were poked with umbrellas, and banged with walking-sticks by every one of the spectators who could get within reach of them. I will say nothing harsher of the racing than that it was an error of judgment. If the show had been got up purely with a view to profit, the manager would have had his justification. He could have pointed to the crowds who rushed into the Hall at four o'clock on purpose to see the races. They would not come before to inspect the donkeys in their stalls, and take stock of the results of the teaching of humanity. They would only pay their

shillings to be amused—to see animals driven against their will, and used against their nature. Yes, “used against their nature.” In this one sentence is contained the whole objection to donkey-racing. The animal was not intended to be a racer. He is not adapted for it. It is not “his nature to.” One does not need to be an “eminent naturalist” to discover this. The fact is patent to the most ordinary observation. The donkey has a large head, and a large body upon very slim, and somewhat short legs. It is evident that those legs were not intended to carry that heavy unwieldy body along at a rapid rate. It is obvious, too, that his foot was not designed so much for speed, as to enable him to tread securely. The hoof in its natural state is furnished with extremely sharp rims, leaving a hollow in the centre, and this provision is manifestly designed to fit him for travelling on slippery ground, and for ascending the precipitous sides of hills. In fact, the donkey is a beast of burden for the mountain, as the camel is for the sandy desert, the elephant for the jungle, and the horse for the level plain. The donkey is constantly protesting against man’s misuse of him. If he could speak, he would say plainly “I am not a racer,” but, as he can’t speak, he does the best he can to convey his meaning to his insensible master. When he is urged too fast, he obstinately holds back and kicks; when he is laden too heavily, he lies down; but if well fed and well treated, he will always do the work he is fitted for. He will carry a reasonable burden without a murmur, and he will trudge on for miles over the roughest roads patiently and steadily, without showing any signs of fatigue. At future donkey-shows—and I hope there will be one every year—there must be no racing, even to please the sensation hunters.

From what I saw at the Agricultural Hall, I had reason to believe that costermongers’ donkeys were better treated than was generally supposed. But thinking it probable that only the best specimens had been chosen for exhibition, I determined to pursue my researches in quarters where the masters of the donkeys were not under the eye of ladies and gentlemen of the Humane Society. With this purpose I went down to Billingsgate at six o’clock in the morning, when the costermongers were arriving in their donkey-trucks for their supply of fish; and afterwards visited the New Cattle Market at Islington, where, every Friday afternoon, large numbers of horses and donkeys of the humblest class are exposed for sale. At Billingsgate, I saw from forty to fifty donkeys. I saw them arrive with their empty trucks, and I waited to see them depart with their loads; but, in the course of two hours I did not notice a single case in which a donkey was ill treated. On the contrary, they seemed to be used with great kindness and consideration. The first thing the costermongers did on jumping out of their trucks was to relieve the donkeys of their bridles, and set baskets of food before them; and generally, when they came up from the market with in-

stalments of their loads, they stirred up the chaff and beans in the baskets, to enable the animals to finish their breakfasts comfortably. I did not observe that any of the trucks or carts were overloaded; but fish was scarce and dear in the market that morning. Perhaps, if the costermongers could have afforded to buy a larger stock, they would not have been so considerate of their beasts. However, as the song says, let us speak of a man as we find him. I must say that on this occasion the costermonger behaved to his donkey in the most exemplary manner; and if I had gone to Billingsgate with the hope and desire of witnessing cruelty to the animal, I should have had to come away bitterly disappointed.

I think I *was* a little disappointed; for it was in some such terms as these that I addressed an active and intelligent officer of the City Police, whom I met in the vicinity of London's column: "How is it that the costermongers all treat their donkeys so well?" To which the active and intelligent officer replied:

"'Cos it's their interest, sir; they would be fools to ill treat their best friend."

"But they *do* ill treat them *sometimes*," I said, pursuing my disappointment.

"Yes," was the reply, "when they are drunk; but when they are drunk they ill treat their wives, and they would ill treat you, or even me."

This coincides with the information which I received from an officer of the Humane Society, who told me that donkeys came to grief chiefly when their masters were drunk, and when they were handed over to the tender mercies of persons who had no interest in them. "On Hampsstead Heath, Blackheath, and at sea-side places," said my informant, "donkeys are used shamefully, even by their proprietors; they can make more by them in a day than they are worth, and they don't mind killing them."

The pursuit of pleasure is generally thoughtless and ruthless. Have you not seen a sixteen-stone materfamilias, with her whole family of daughters, ruthlessly riding as many donkeys to death on Hampsstead Heath, utterly regardless of their sufferings? Inexorable trade is not so inexorable after all, even when personified in the "ruffian costermonger."

On the Friday afternoon when I visited the New Cattle Market, there were possibly a hundred donkeys, and twice that number of horses, exposed for sale in the pens running along the lower side of the great square. It was a strange scene. The ground for fully a quarter of a mile was occupied by a dense throng of horses, donkeys, mules, goats, men, boys, and dogs, all kicking, galloping, braying, bleating, shouting, shrieking, and barking together; while strewn along the stones among the never-ceasing tramp of feet, were exposed for sale every imaginable article appertaining to the cart-shed and the stable, with an infinite variety of articles not appertaining to either in the most distant degree. There were saddles, bridles, traces, buckles, belly-bands, wheels, axle-trees, iron tires, currycombs, brushes, splash-boards, tail-

boards, and broken shafts, and among these, in the most promiscuous confusion, iron bedsteads, teacups, coffee-pots, spades, rakes, books, pictures, cradles, cheese-cutters, canisters, chemists' bottles, pomatum, maps, lanterns, and literally thousands of other articles besides. It was as if a fleet of ships, carrying the contents of all the marine-store-shops of London, had been wrecked there, and the sea had receded, leaving their scattered cargoes high and dry. Along this wreck-littered shore, deafened by the bawling of loud harsh voices, calling winkles, ginger-beer, slobber, pine-apple rock, fruit, fried fish, and every imaginable vile catable and drinkable; through an atmosphere steaming with the exhalations of mangy animals, and reeking with the odour of fermenting humanity, for the most part clad in fustian and corduroy, I made my way to the place where the donkeys are "shown off" to intending purchasers. Here, surely, was the place to be harrowed by the spectacle of cruelty to animals.

The first thing I noticed reminded me of a good story I once heard of fifteen economical gentlemen, who proposed to go out for a day's pleasure in a vehicle drawn by one horse. Though there were fifteen of them, they were desirous of adding one more to the number, and accordingly Mr. Abrahams, who was the promoter of the affair, invited his friend, Mr. Johnson, to join the party. "What, sixteen people and only one horse!" exclaimed Mr. Johnson; "the animal can't do it; he'll never go." "Oh, never fear about that," said Mr. Abrahams; "we'll make him go—we shall all have whips."

The costermongers and stable-men attending this fair were so far like the fifteen economical gentlemen, that they all had sticks; or, if there were any who hadn't, they had every opportunity of providing themselves with the article, as half a dozen fellows were continually elbowing through the throng with bundles of ash saplings under their arms, calling out, "Real stingers, only a penny!" Now, I cannot declare that I witnessed any actual cruelty of a savage or aggravated character inflicted upon the donkeys; but at the same time I am bound to say that the "stingers" were used very freely. But it was evidently more from habit, than from any intention of hurting the beasts. Whenever a costermonger wished to give vent to his feelings, whatever those feelings might be, he came down with a whack on a donkey's back. If he was angered, it was "whack;" if he was pleased, it was "whack;" if he meant to signify his approval of a good thing, it was "whack;" if he meant to signify his disapproval of a bad thing, it was "whack;" if he meant nothing at all, it was "whack." Always "whack!" And no man was at all particular as to the donkey he marked his emphasis upon. If it were his own donkey, well and good; if it were his neighbour's donkey, well and good. Indeed, they seemed to be all very grateful to anybody who gave their donkeys whacks, and even adjured you to give them whacks, if you were not disposed to do so of your own accord. It seemed to give especial gratifi-

cation to the boys, who could not afford to buy "stingers," to go up the line of donkeys, and give them all whacks on the ribs with their open hands; and the proprietors appeared to think that the boys were appreciative, and were showing their animals a kindness. The donkeys did not mind all this whacking much; or, at least, they did not appear to mind it; but, I should say, for much the same reason that the eels are said not to mind being skinned. A costermonger will tell you that a donkey does not feel these blows; and that is possibly true when the donkey has seen several years of hard labour. With constant whacking his hide becomes tanned into hard leather on his back. Feel his sides and his haunches, and you will find the sinews and the skin beaten and welded into a thick, corded, insensible, armour-plate. When the donkey has been hammered into this state, he does not feel blows very keenly; but in his youth his skin and flesh are as tender as those of any other animal, and every blow is torture to him. The costermongers do not consider this; but I believe if they were led to consider it, they would soon see both the policy and the humanity of moderating the use of the stick. It is unfortunately an article of the costermonger's creed that a donkey is an animal that will stand a great deal of beating; it is another article of his creed—and this exhausts the whole code of his religion—that a donkey is a racing animal, that ought to be made to do from eight to ten miles an hour. It should be the object of future shows at the Agricultural Hall to prove to him that he labours under a gross error; and to convince him that the donkey is as keenly sensitive to pain as any other animal, and that it is designed by nature not for a racer, but for a patient, steady-going, sure-footed beast of burden.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION.

THERE is a scheme on foot in Paris for a new move in the way of education. It takes a bold theoretical swing, as French schemes often do, and does not propose to stop at the immediately practicable. But what was immediately practicable, its promoters tell us that they really have done at St. Germain-en-Laye, and it is now for men who are of their mind in other countries, to see for themselves how one wheel of the system works, and if they like its action, to provide that it shall set other wheels in motion. The plan is to establish in the different countries of Europe a series of international and corresponding schools for the middle and the upper classes, which will enable a boy during the course of a liberal general education, to acquire thoroughly several modern languages, each being learned with others, among schoolfellows of all nations, in the land where it is spoken. The arrangement of classes and method of study being precisely the same in each international school, the English youth, after studying for a year or two in France, may pass

to Italy or Germany, and continue his general course of instruction exactly at the point where it was broken off, while he is adding practical to the previous elementary teaching of German or Italian, and his teaching is presently continued through German or Italian, instead of French. For it is to be a special care of each school to teach thoroughly, to pupils from all nations, the language and literature of the country to which it belongs.

The working out of this idea has been undertaken by a European association for International Education, of which the secretary is M. Eugène Rendu, Inspector-General of Public Instruction. To this gentleman, at Paris, 99, Rue de Clichy, anybody practically interested in the matter may, doubtless, apply for information. In the first place, there was formed a sub-committee of this European association of Frenchmen, under the presidency of M. Dumas, of the Institut, senator; consisting of M. Denière, president of the Tribunal of Commerce; M. Hachette, the bookseller; M. Lavallée, founder of the central school; M. Mourier, vice-rector of the Paris Academy; Senator Bonjean, M. Monjean, Director of the Chaptal College, M. Marguerin, Director of the Turgot School; M. Pellat, Dean of the Faculty of Law; MM. Delbruck, Emile Pereire, and Eugène Rendu. This sub-committee resolved that henceforth an educated European ought not to feel himself as a stranger in any country of Europe. That, for many reasons, the intellectual, commercial, economic, and political relation between people and people call for strong recognition in a system of education suited to the day. That such recognition would be obtained by a system of uniform studies carried on simultaneously in several countries, and in their several languages, so that the pupils in passing from one nation and language to another, would find no notable change in the course of study to retard the progress of their education. That the gathering together in each school of boys from all parts of Europe destined to occupy high political, administrative, commercial, and industrial positions in their different countries, would itself add greatly to the efficiency of this method of training. Such was the purport of the report of the sub-committee, which appeared two years and a few months ago; the next step was to found in France what might serve as a pattern school. That having been done, the question now is of extension of the system.

The international school now founded is at St. Germain-en-Laye, famous for forest walks and for the terrace, whence one sees Paris about five leagues distant as but a small part of the wide prospect. The capital is within easy reach, while the boys have, as at Eton or Harrow, the comparative privacy, free range, and healthy surroundings of country life, for it is part of the scheme that the scholars shall not only fence and have gymnastic training, but also ride, and swim, and pull an oar; a couple of boats form part of the educational stock.

Let it be clearly understood, however, that we are not speaking of this school with more knowledge about it than could be got from its report upon itself, addressed to M. Eugène Rendu, and published lately in the *Constitutionnel*. We tell only what is planned. It may be great cry and little wool, but the cry is not a bad one, and in echoing it we take for granted that no Englishman will send a son to the international school of St. Germain-en-Laye without first going to the place and seeing for himself how far it keeps the promise of its founders.

The manager, M. Jules Brandt, reports that a thorough teaching of Latin and Greek belongs to the plan, but that to be thorough it should be preceded by full primary instruction, and that if the classical studies be thus entered upon when the mind of the learner is ripe for them, they will be acquired more rapidly and thoroughly than usual, and this with enjoyment. Two hours a day are given to the language and literature of the country of the school, and prominence is given, as in Germany, to the study of instrumental music and singing. It is part, also, of the design that no teacher shall have more than twenty pupils under his charge.

An international school, according to the design here sketched, would contain pupils not only of different countries, but also of different creeds. While the religious care of each little community is left to its own chaplain, and the school receives all creeds on equal terms, the growth of a cosmopolitan indifference is said to be guarded against by the careful maintenance of a high moral and religious feeling in the school. And it would be well if boys could thus learn that there is but one common religion, whatever the number of theologies.

The report acknowledges the friendly sympathy of the Minister of Public Instruction, and ends with a hope that the French Emperor himself will recognise a system which "seems to be the truest expression of the law of education in the nineteenth century."

So it may be, but it is nevertheless little more than reverting to the law of education in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries. Students went then so young to college that the colleges were practically schools. There was a very uniform method of instruction, so that colleges in France, Italy, England, and elsewhere, sent their scholars through the same "trivium" and "quadrivium." The fame of a particular teacher would draw pupils from all parts of Europe to Paris, Montpellier, Bologna, Louvain, and Oxford. The student in search of a good education rambled thus through different places of education from one country to another, and the trained scholar was, by the want of a large educated public in each country, forced to be cosmopolitan. The educated men of all countries banded themselves into one republic of letters, and were like the Levites of old, without a country set apart for them, scattered among the possessions of the other tribes. In that old cos-

mopolitan republic Latin was the common tongue, because no living language spoke to a large number of the learned. What scholarship then did to compel intercommunication between men of all countries, commerce is now doing, and the recent immense increase of facility for rapid travel makes even the idler wish that he were less frequently tongue-tied by the want of power to speak at ease with Frenchman, Italian, or Spaniard, German or Dane, when meeting him and receiving friendly offices from him in his country.

If one could really get good schools and correspondence of teaching, there is no doubt that a boy would see the world who could be sent to school for a year in France, continue his studies next year in Germany, in the year following carry his books to Italy, and, still working his way up, as it were, in the classes of a single school, study next year in Russia or in Spain. The advantages of such a system would outweigh its disadvantages, and the contact with so wide a community of boys might possibly be one of them. It certainly would not denationalise the young English mind. English boys, sure to be numerous in any school of the sort thus proposed, would be a community ready to fight in play-hours with the boys of any other nation if the honour of their country were brought into question. To the common schoolboy's catechism, beginning "What's your father?" would be added "What's your fatherland?" Every boy would uphold and magnify his own, and the result in each case would be, with the tolerance that comes of near acquaintance with different ways of thought, anything but the undesirable state of mind in which a man don't care to think himself a Frenchman, or a German, or an Italian, or an Englishman, but prides himself on being a citizen of the world at large.

Equally remote is the danger from such training of destruction of the boundaries set between creed and creed. If each section of young Christians in such a school is to have its own chaplain and its separate worship, boy nature will exercise itself only too surely in argument over those obvious lines of separation, and the only danger is that, like their fathers, they will trouble themselves more about tenets and distinctions of belief, and points of separation between Christians, than is altogether good for them. Contrast with this a school containing many boys from many parts of the world, like that of the Moravians at Newwied, where the animating spirit is simply religious, but there is one common worship, and no boy thinks of asking whether it be what his father would call orthodox or sectarian. There every one is content to feel that the chapel service is an act of Christian worship, and that its only purpose is service of God and animation to a life of fulfilled duty. The true religious tone of a school, and the right spirit of toleration is in this way insensibly acquired, but it is acquired more surely than it could be by a proclaimed tolerance of sects with a select assortment of chaplains always kept on hand.

Practically, the Englishman who wishes to educate his son has nothing before him but a choice of evils variously mixed with good. And even if a school be faultless for one boy, it may be absolutely unfit for another. What our own very costly public schools don't do, it has taken the recent Public School Commission four fat volumes to tell. At nearly all there is a good physical training, at Rugby there is a first-rate education of the character, but a young Englishman fresh from his public school, or a graduate fresh from one of our universities, is probably, so far as school and university have gone, in point of scholarship and general information, the most thinly educated man of his sort to be found in Europe. Eton, with an endowment that gives it an income of twenty thousand a year, charges from a hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds a year for incomparably worse instruction than can be had at a first-class French public school for six-and-thirty pounds. At the Toulouse Lyceum, every boarder having bought an outfit of the value of twenty pounds, board and instruction cost in the lowest division twenty-four pounds a year, in the second division twenty-six, in the highest thirty-six, and this charge includes the expense of keeping clothes in repair, washing, medical attendance, books and writing materials. "The meals," says Professor Arnold, who has described this public school, "though plain are good, and they are set out with a propriety, and a regard for appearances, which, when I was a boy, graced no school dinners that I ever saw." Whatever other views we may take of the question, the spur of some added international competition may quicken the pace of school reform at home.

A CROON ON HENNAcliffe.

Thus said the rushing Raven
Unto his hungry mate:
Ho! Gossip! for Rood-Haven!
There be corpses—six or eight:
Caw! Caw! the crew and skipper
Are wallowing in the sea,
So there's a savoury supper
For my old dame and me!

Caw! Gaffer! Thou art dreaming,—
The shore hath wreckers bold,
Would rend the yelling seamen
From the clutching billows' hold!
Caw! Caw! they'd bound for booty
Into the Dragon's Den:
And shout for "death or duty"
If the prey were drowning men!

Loud laugh'd the listening surges
At the guess our grandame gave,—
You might call them, *Bosnèrges*,
From the thunder of their wave!
And mockery follow'd, after,
The sea-bird's jeering brood:
That fill'd the skies with laughter
From Lundy-Light to Rood!

Caw! Caw! then said the Raven,—
I am fourscore years and ten,
Yet never, in Rood-Haven,
Did I croak for rescued men:—
They will save the captain's girdle,
And shirt, if shirt there be,
But leave their blood to curdle
For my old dame and me!

So, said the rushing Raven
Unto his hungry mate,
Ho! Gossip! for Rood-Haven,
There be corpses, six or eight!
Caw! Caw! The crew and skipper
Are wallowing in the sea,—
O! what a savoury supper
For my old dame and me!

QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER XLIX. AGAIN THE SULTAN.

It must have been at least a thousand years ago that the countess was the ruddled and drunken Wild Woman who used to go about the fairs, and exhibit herself to the bumpkins at so many liards a head. She had always been a lady of fashion—of the very highest fashion. Of course. Yet, for all that, when the visitors had taken their departure, she sent out Mr. Kafooze's hump-backed niece for a little brandy, the which that meek young person, who was half servitor and half governess, brought in from the adjacent public-house, with a corner of her ink-stained apron thrown over the bottle.

It may here be not inappropriately remarked, that as Mr. M'Variety was following in the wake of his illustrious visitors, he met little Mr. Kafooze in the passage, and that, in the most affable manner, he immediately snote the school-master on the shoulder, and inflicted a playful dig beneath one of his ribs. "What the dickens brings you here, my moonraker?" was the inquiry of the manager of Ranelagh.

"Why, I live here, Mr. M'Variety," the little man replied, rubbing his hands together, with somewhat of an uneasy expression of countenance.

"Live here! Why, I thought you didn't live anywhere, unless it was in the moon."

"There's my name on the door-plate, Mr. M'Variety. I keep a school. I keep a little school, to eke out a livelihood. Times are very hard, and I don't get much of a salary at the Gardens, as you know sir, although I've been there these five-and-twenty years."

"These five hundred years, you mean. And so you keep a school? What a rum 'un you are, to be sure. Find it pay? Eh! my noble stargazer?"

"Pretty well, Mr. M'Variety; only you'll oblige me if you won't mention it. It's really very important that you shouldn't mention it. It might do me harm with the parents. You see, sir, that this is a very pious neighbourhood, and party feeling runs dreadfully high. I might

lose all my pupils if it were known that I had any engagement—you understand—that I had anything to do with the Gardens. Parents are so very prejudiced, you know; and people who grumble at having to pay half a guinea a quarter, make as much fuss about it as if they were sending their young ones to the University of Oxford.”

“All right, my Trojan. By-by, Kafooze.” And Mr. M’Variety walked away. “Queer little customer that,” he mused; “who’d ever have thought of his keeping a school, and teaching the young idea how to shoot. I wonder if he tells the young ’uns anything about the stars. He’s a good deal more than three parts cracked is Kafooze; but he’s well up to his business, and is as worthy a little soul as ever breathed. Curious, now, that man believes in all the humbug he’s paid five-and-twenty shillings a week to cram down people’s throats. He believes in it as strongly as if he got twenty pounds a week. He’s not a bad sort, and is worth every penny of his sal to me. Brag! I’ll put him down for a snuff-box some of these fine days.”

It was one of the most amiable traits in Mr. M’Variety’s character to be continually presenting snuff-boxes to the persons in his employ. There was scarcely a carpenter, a scene-painter, a property-man, a lamplighter, or a fiddler in his service, who had not been, at some period or another, gratified with one of these tokens of the manager’s esteem and confidence. Mr. M’Variety purchased them cheap, at the pawnbroker’s, and with the old inscriptions burnished out (for it frequently happened that they had done service previously, as gifts to deserving employes) they looked quite beautiful. Indeed, it was rumoured that, in this manner, the manager had often to buy his own testimonials back again. Times had never been so hard with Mr. M’Variety as to render it impossible for him to dispense at least two sets of these snuff-boxes in the course of a season. Once, when business was dreadfully bad, he had been forced to come down to tortoiseshell; but the pull up of a good benefit was speedily the means of the precious metal asserting its accustomed sway.

A remarkable interview took place in the afternoon between the countess and Lily. The former had told her that she was to dine out that evening with some gentlemen—the gentlemen she had seen that forenoon, in fact—and bade her get on her bonnet and shawl. They would take a cab, she said, to the other side of the water, and purchase some articles of dress; for the dinner was to be a very grand one, and she wished Lily to appear as smart as possible.

To the countess’s astonishment—to her simulated astonishment, perchance—the girl cast herself at her feet, and, with passionate entreaties, begged to be allowed to remain at home. And, again, she implored her not to ask her the reason of her reluctance to attend the dinner. She would rather be beaten, locked up, starved, than confess that reason.

She was sincere; although, Heaven knows,

she was interceding, in her own despite, and uttering entreaties against herself. She had seen Edgar. She saw him: handsome, happy, and splendid. She would have given the world to be allowed to speak to him, to look him full in the eyes, to touch his kid-gloved hand. To sit by his side at dinner, to be in his company a whole evening, to listen to his voice, to see him eat and drink, would have been to her ineffable bliss. But she dared not confront it. It would be happiness leading only to her destruction, and her death. If she saw him again, she must once more fly, once more bury herself. She felt that she loved him more than ever, and that to give reins to her love was to court ruin, and invite despair.

And Edgar Greyfaunt! Had he seen her? Had he recognised her when she swooned. Yes; the sultan’s eyes had condescended to light on the horse-rider’s little drudge. He had felt flattered and gratified when he was aware of the influence his presence had produced on her. He was gratified, but not grateful. The girl’s fainting away was naturally the subject of conversation among the Pilgrims when they had left the house. Sir William Long was driving Greyfaunt in his cabriolet to town; and the sultan did not long delay in hunting that he knew something of the “little party” who had been so suddenly the means of breaking up the interview with the countess.

“I think I’ve made something like an impression in that quarter,” he remarked, with an infinite fatuity of complacency.

Sir William Long repressed his first impulse, which I am afraid was to lift up the cab apron and fling Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt over one of the big wheels upon the freshly macadamised pavement of the Westminster-road.

“Indeed,” he rejoined, biting his lip. “I was not aware that you had ever seen Madame Ernestine’s daughter before.”

“Madame Anybody’s daughter,” the young man went on, carelessly. “She must be a kind of foundling, I fancy. The little party and I are old friends.”

“Old friends?”

“Yes. My aunt, Madame de Kergolay, picked her up from some snuffy old priest in Paris, whose niece she was said to be. You understand. A priest’s niece! Queer kind of relationship, that. The aunt never turns up, somehow. Stop, I think the little party was at some school where they ill-treated her. Well, my aunt, who was always picking up waifs and strays of some sort—it didn’t much matter whether they were puppies, or cats, or children, or china monsters—took a great fancy to this little Lily. Yes; that was her name.”

Sir William Long winced. He had another, and stronger impulse: to shorten his whip and lay the lash handsomely about the shoulders of the Sultan Greyfaunt; but he controlled himself again, and observed,

“A very pretty name, I think, Mr. Greyfaunt?”

“Not so pretty as Leopoldine. I knew a

little woman by the name of Leopoldine. By Jove, what a little devil she was! She used to live in the Rue de Seine. Well, Madame de Kergelay grew quite fond of our little party. She turned out badly, however."

"Turned out badly, Mr. Greyfaunt? What do you mean?" Sir William's voice quivered as he spoke. He was very nearly saying, "What the devil do you mean?"

"At all events, she gave my aunt a great deal of trouble. She used to say that she was shockingly hypocritical and deceitful. One day she gave the little party a tremendous wiggling, whereupon, her monkey being up, Miss Lily bolted."

"Do you mean to say that the poor friendless young creature ran away?"

"That's it, Sir William. Unfortunate Miss Bailey, and all the rest of it, though she didn't hang herself in her garters. I'm afraid that the real state of the case was, that she had become smitten with your humble servant. I'm sure I couldn't help it. It was no fault of mine that she took a fancy to me. My aunt, who was a very soft-hearted old lady, was very much cut up when she found that the bird had flown. Would have given a good deal, I dare say, to get her back. But it was no use; they couldn't find the least trace of her; and now she turns up in the company of that horrible old horse-riding woman. Fough! how she smells of brandy. How, in the name of all that's wonderful, she and Lily came together, passes my comprehension."

"It is indeed wonderful; but am I to understand, Mr. Greyfaunt, that it is your intention to continue to pay your attentions to this young lady?"

"How deuced solemn and formal you are, to be sure. But you're rather out in your reckoning. In the first place, it's rather stretching a point to call the little party a young lady. Persons of gentle blood are usually chary as to how they apply that appellation. You and I are men of old family, and don't sow the names of 'lady' and 'gentleman' broadcast."

"Indeed! What would you call this unfortunate child—this young woman—then? I have every reason to believe that she is the daughter of this Madame Ernestine, and she, I know positively, is the widow of an English gentleman of very gentle blood indeed."

"You astonish me. I shouldn't have thought she had ever gone higher in the marriage line than a groom or a harlequin. However, we will call the little party whatever you please. I ordinarily speak of this description of persons as *ces gens*—people. As for paying attentions to her, you are again slightly in error. I never paid her any. It was all on the other side of the hedge. *Je me suis laissé aimer*. The little party took a fancy to me, and for that you will, I hope, agree I am not to blame. I don't think I ever had ten minutes' continuous conversation with her. There is time, nevertheless, to improve the acquaintance. Ah! here we are in Whitehall. I have a call to make at the Foreign

Office. Thank you for the lift. *Au revoir* until dinner-time."

"And it is for this senseless, brainless puppy that Lily has made herself miserable," Sir William Long muttered, as he drove furiously away. "Confound the coxcomb, I should have liked to twist his neck."

CHAPTER I. THE COTTAGE.

THE proposition made by Mr. M'Variety to the countess that evening, at dinner (a repast, by the way, at which Lily was *not* present), was essentially satisfactory to that lady. It was of a duplex nature. First it had reference to the augmentation of Madame Ernestine's weekly stipend; and, sundry pounds and shillings being added thereto, the countess vouchsafed to express her opinion that Mr. M'Variety was "un bon enfant," and exceptionally free from the vice of stinginess, inherent, if she were to be believed, to the managerial tribe.

"You needn't give me credit for too much generosity," the candid manager observed, in return for the countess's somewhat profuse expressions of gratitude, "even when I tell you that your *sal* can go on, if you like, all the winter. The concern doesn't pay, nor anything like it; and I must shut up very soon, or, by Jove, I shall be shut up myself; but that will have nothing to do with your engagement. I mean to come out with a bang next spring, so you can be practising something stunning in the high school way between this and next Easter. Open or shut, you'll find the ghost walk every Saturday at three p.m., military time; and if ever you want a fiver on account, you'll find Billy Van Post always ready to honour your I O U. Sounds very liberal, don't it? You needn't imagine, for all that, that I'm one of the Brothers Cheeryble. The fact is, countess, that what suits your book suits my book, and that's all about it."

As he spoke, Mr. M'Variety slapped, perchance involuntarily, his waistcoat-pocket. Of course Madame Ernestine, not being a clairvoyant, could not see, through the well-shrunk tweed and glazed calico lining of that garment, a neatly-folded slip of paper of a dull grey hue, which, had it been opened, would have proved to be a cheque, the amount of which has nothing to do with this recital, drawn in favour of J. M'Variety, Esq., or bearer, by a person signing himself William Long. But, morally, Madame Ernestine had cut all her eye-teeth, and could see through a millstone or a plaid waistcoat as well as her neighbours; and she understood the enterprising manager perfectly well when he hinted that it was not through any spontaneous intuition of munificence, but for divers reasons well known to himself, that he proposed to prolong her engagement on terms so exceedingly favourable.

"And, while we're talking business," continued the manager, "I don't see why you should go on wasting your sweetness on the desert air in that poky little hole where I found you this morning. Old Foozluu!"—it was by this irre-

verent name that M'Variety called the Ruler of the Planets—"is a very good sort of a card; but he's a desperate slow coach; his house ain't much bigger than a mouse-trap, and there isn't an inch of style about him."

"Who is this Monsieur Kafooze?" the countess asked, turning quickly on her interlocutor. "Quelle est cette vieille ganache qui me conte toujours des balivernes sur les étoiles? Whence comes he, this idiotic old schoolmaster, with his moons, and his stars, and his other importunences?"

"Poor old Foozlum. There's no harm about him. How sharp you do take one up, to be sure! I suppose he's a right to let lodgings, and be a little cracked, as long as he don't bite anybody, if he likes. I was quite staggered this morning to find out what he was in the daytime."

"And what is he at night? A clown, a man-baboon, a lamplighter, a fiddler, a joueur de cornemuse?"

"That's tellings. Ask me no questions, and—you know the rest. Billy Van Post's got him down in the pay list, and he draws his sal pretty regular. That's all we've any of us any right to know. It ain't much, but he's worth his salt to me, and more. However, it isn't about old Foozlum that we're talking. His shabby little rattletrap of a place ain't good enough for you and missy to live in, let alone receiving your friends. You want some place more stylish—something slap up."

"I don't want to live in town," the countess returned. "I cannot afford to keep a carriage—there were days when I kept two—and in eight days I should be ruined in cabs."

"Don't want you to be ruined in anything. Don't want you to live at the West-end. You'd be getting into some devilry there. Why don't you come to the Cottage, you and missy?"

"The Cottage, where is that?"

"Don't you know that queer old crib behind the ball-room. Two hundred years old, they say it is. I think it is a thousand. There's a good many rats, and a ghost or two, but it's very picturesque, and in tol lol repair. Besides, it won't cost you a penny for rent or taxes, and old Mrs. Snuffburn—that's the Ranelagh housekeeper, you know—who's been there ever since the time of Gog and Magog, will see that you're all right and comfortable."

The countess was nothing loth.

"But," she said, as though making terms, "I shall be able to see all my friends there, Monsieur Mac?"

"The whole boiling of 'em. Tom, Dick, and Harry. Lords and ladies—whoever you please."

"Au bout du compte, elle me va, votre offre. I accept it," she answered simply.

"That's all right. You'll be as jolly as a sandboy there, and if you want a nice little supper as often as ever you like, the kitchen's close by, and I don't give a French man-cook six pounds a week for nothing. What an extravagant rascal he is, to be sure. That fellow would fry his grandmother in the best Epping butter

at one-and-sevenpence-a pound, if Billy Van Post did not keep a sharp look-out after him."

The bargain, then, was concluded. It suited the Wild Woman in every way. She wanted an oasis in the midst of a desert, a solitude where none but her intimates could hear her, and where she could be as savage and uproarious as she pleased. She was cabined and cribbed in the Little South Lambeth street, with the school-children down stairs, and the Chinese on one side, and the nurse on the other. "Va pour la chaumière," she cried, joyously. The Cottage was something wild, something Bohemian, something uncivilised, like herself.

The removal was soon effected. They had no penates. Lily's wardrobe could have been conveyed in a peck measure. The girl was sorry, nevertheless, to leave the little old schoolmaster and his humpbacked niece. Rhodope, indeed, cried very bitterly on the day of the lodger's departure, and, as she wound her arms round Lily, frequently complained that she had now nothing worth living for. It touched Lily to find that there was, after all, some one to like her, although that somebody was crook-backed and troubled with bunions.

Mr. Kafooze was sorry too—very sorry. He said more than once that he did not like the turn affairs were taking, and that some one meant mischief to some one else. The stars told him so. But the celestial bodies, vouchsafing him no further information, he was forced to assume a bland expression of countenance, and to mutter that it was no business of his, and that he had no right to interfere. He kept very carefully out of the way of the countess, of whom he was honestly afraid, sending for the rent by Rhodope, and requesting his late lodger—in a three-cornered note, beautifully executed in round hand—to do him the extreme favour of returning the latch-key. But he stole a quiet opportunity to bid Lily good-by on the kitchen stairs.

"It isn't a Kathleen Mavourneen farwell, after all," he whispered. "It won't be for years, and it won't be for ever. The stars tell me so. I shall see you often, my dear, much oftener than you'll see me. You needn't take any notice of me, unless there's something very particular. I'm nobody, but I'm always about. God bless you, and beware of the gentlefolks."

GRANDFATHER BLACKTOOTH.

THERE are in Switzerland loftier mountains and more extensive ice-fields than in the Upper Engadine, but nowhere else does Nature show herself in a wilder or more savage guise. There are no fields of rye or millet, no patches of green pasture. Save for a grey nightcap of clouds, and a scanty kilt of green-black pines, the gaunt barren hills stand naked from top to toe. Even on the lower levels there is little pasture for sheep or cattle, and goats have enough to do to gather a bare subsistence among the craggy precipices. For nine months of the year snow covers the ground. Such was the region in

which I found myself on crossing the long winding path, deeply furrowed and full of loose stones, a sign that in wet weather it is on each slope the bed of a very respectable torrent, which leads from the valley of Münster into the wild gorge of Ofen. I had been on foot since early morning, and the evening was already closing in, with black threatening clouds. It was clearly high time to think of quarters for the night. They told me at Münster that I would find a chalet at Ofen; but by this time I had descended the western slope of the mountain wall which divides the two valleys, traversed a marshy plain, and reached the skirt of a dense forest, without meeting a living creature (except a herdsman chasing some straggling goats high up among the rocks, beyond the reach of parley), and without discovering even in the distance any trace of human habitation. The light of day still lingered, but I knew the darkness would drop down suddenly like a lid. Before it fell, therefore, I took the precaution of referring for guidance to the pages of my trusty Berlepsch.

Berlepsch was not reassuring. The little hostelry of which I was in search was still some distance off, and the peculiarities of the route thither were summed up in this pithy sentence: "Toujours des forêts, ou se cachent les ours." This Berlepsch was a Job's comforter. Brigands would not have surprised me, but bears! Who would have thought of bears in Central Europe at this time of day? Still there was the warning in black and white; and more than that, the valley of Buotsch, which I saw opening upon the left, was also described as a famous haunt of Master Bruin. To add to the interest of the situation, just then the last gleam of light faded from the sky; and, buckling my knapsack more tightly to my back, grasping my staff with a resolute air, I started to explore the forest in the dark. The trees stood so thickly together that the path seemed to be hewn out of some solid black substance, and to be shut in between straight lofty walls of ebony, while the cloudy heavens overhead supplied a cover of only a shade less pitchy hue. As a philosopher, I deemed it well not to admit to myself the existence of bears in that quarter, as even a possibility; but I don't mind confessing that in spite of mental adherence to that first principle, I started once or twice at a rustle among the pines, and, coming suddenly at a bend in the road on a big black something stretched across it, I tried to dodge past it in some trepidation, till I was close enough to identify it as only a log of wood. It was not my fate, however, to fight that day with bears or beasts of any sort. After more than an hour's walk a light twinkled below me through the trees, and the yelping of curs told me that I was near the home of man. A strong square low building of undressed stone, with loop-holed windows and iron-bound door, stood before me. In answer to my knock, a gruff voice cried, "Komm herein," and, entering, I found myself in a dim half-lit chamber. Five or six children were seated round a wooden

table, to whom a stout burly man, with grizzled beard and up-rolled sleeves, was ladling out soup. I was soon seated at the board, with a steaming platter before me like the rest. More substantial fare followed, with a bottle of very good Grison wine, and soon after I was fast asleep in a little room under the roof, dreaming of a terrific hand to hand combat with half a dozen bears.

Next morning my host, with Swiss politeness, came to keep me company at breakfast. "How about the bears?" I asked; "were there really any hereabouts?"

"Oh yes," he said; "Master Petz gives us a look in now and then, but he has grown very shy of late. Once I shot a tremendous fellow within a stone's throw of where we are. That was three or four years ago. For some time continual ravages had been committed among the flocks of the neighbouring valleys. Each week two or three goats or sheep were missing; but in the valley of Forn we were left for a while at peace. At length our turn came, and we tried in vain to trace the despoiler. One day I was taking a nap after dinner. We had had the 'fon' very bad; you know what that is, I suppose sir? the hot blast which blows now and again, scorching up the vegetation, and making man and beast feel weak and languid. My maid awoke me, rushing in with a cry of alarm. 'Oh, master, there's something the matter with the goats; they are running home like mad.' I was so sleepy and tired, I put her off by saying, 'Oh, it's only a fox; never mind it.' But the goats, which had halted for a few minutes on the brow of the slope over there—you can see it from the window—all huddled together, and gazing anxiously behind them, suddenly broke into another run, and came scampering pell-mell down the bank. When the maid told me this, I knew there was something at hand worse than a fox. So, shouldering my Buchse, I set off to reconnoitre. At first I went very cautiously, prying about everywhere. I saw the footprints of some large beast, but they crossed and recrossed so often I could not make out the trail. Then the gathering dusk warned me to be home, and so, giving up the chase, I turned back. As I was going along, never dreaming but what old Petz had made his escape, I saw a huge black mass crouching beside a rock. Instinctively I took aim and fired. The creature gave a loud growl, rose on its hind legs as if to spring on me, for I was quite near before I observed it, and then fell flat on its face stone dead. My bullet had reached the heart. It was a large brown bear, and weighed five hundred pounds."

"Have you been much troubled by bears since then?"

"No, not much. But every year we lose a goat or two, which we suppose goes into Master Brown's paunch, and we see his footprints occasionally in the snow. But if you want to hear all about the bears, you should go to Jacob Fili, of Ternelz. He's the man to tackle old Petz. Why, he has shot more than a dozen of them."

As Zernetz lay on my route, and as it was raining hard when I got there, I felt I could not do better than spend the day with Fili, who keeps a very good inn—the Lion. Two or three people were dining at a sort of table d'hôte when I entered, and Fili was attending to their orders as mildly and benevolently as if he had never faced a bear in his life. He is a slight but very muscular man, of middle height, with a curious flat face of a yellow sun-burned hue, which, together with a low pork-pie hat, gave him quite a Chinese aspect. He has the keen wild restless look about the eyes which is so characteristic of the Alpine hunter, and wore the short grey coat with green facings, which is the favourite German sporting costume. Having been laid up with bronchitis, the doctor had prohibited smoking, but he kept a long unlit Tyrolese cigar in his mouth, through force of habit. After dinner I had a long gossip with him about the achievements which had made him famous in the Engadine, and drawn to his roof Russian princes and German counts, anxious to have the honour of joining him in the chase.

Two months before I visited him, Fili had shot a she bear and two cubs at twelve feet distance, and despatched them in ten minutes. He had been on their trail for some time, but came upon them at the last suddenly. He fired at the mother first, and was fortunate enough to hit her in a vital part, or his position would have been very dangerous, for a she bear is terrible in the fury with which she defends her young. "And, by-the-by," he added, "I dare say you would like to taste a slice of my old grannu." The phrase was new to me, and had a cannibal sound, so I said I had already dined sufficiently. "Oh," replied Jacob, "one can always eat grandfather or grandmother when one has no appetite for anything else;" and he hurried off, returning in a few minutes with a plate of dry black meat. "That's a bit of prime bear ham, such as you won't get every day," he said; and my scruples being thus removed, I fell to. The flesh had very much the taste, as it had also the appearance, of hung beef which had been smoked and not cured in our English manner. I owned it very palatable.

"I'll tell you what," said the enthusiastic Jacob, "it's heavenly meat when you get it at the right time and in the right way. The paws rolled in clay and baked in the embers are delicious; but I never enjoyed old Sweetfoot so much as once I did a slice from the inside of his thigh. I had been after the beast two days, and had exhausted my little stock of food at the second morning's breakfast. It was nearly evening when I shot him, and I was famishing with hunger. I knew I could not get home that night, so I cut a good whack off old Petz, and roasted it as well as I could over a fire of twigs. It didn't need sauce to make it go down, take my word for it."

When fresh, the meat has a sweet porky flavour—so sweet that it is generally soaked for some time in water before being cooked, as

otherwise it would be somewhat sickening to most palates.

Coming through the village, I had noticed bears' paws on an escutcheon. These, I now learned, are the arms of the Planta family, a very old one in the Engadine. They are appropriate to this day, for the present representative of the house has brought down a good many bears with his own hand. In 1857, eight bears were shot in the Engadine, and three or four have been killed in almost every one of the succeeding years. The bear is a permanent, although he is yearly becoming a rarer, denizen of the Rhetian High Alps. He is a regular visitor to the valleys of Malleuchles, Misocco, Terzier, Bregaglia, Livrio, and Ambra, and other glens and gorges of that sparsely peopled and uncultivated region, where the wild cat also still hunts the marmot, and the vulture swoops down upon the chamois. Three, or rather four, descriptions of the Ursus are found in these parts—the large black, the large grey, and the little brown bear, to which may be added also the white bear. A fine specimen of the last named, shot by Jacob Fili, is in the museum of Coire (Chur), and another in a private collection at Bevers. The brown bear is, however, the most common, the others being exceedingly rare.

On the whole, Grandfather Blacktooth, as Bruin is popularly called in the Engadine, is of a comparatively mild good-natured disposition, and, in a great degree, a vegetarian. Grass, herbs, roots, and wild berries are the chief articles of his diet; but occasionally, when these fail, or when he is seized with a craving for richer meat, he makes a raid on the goats or sheep. One is known to have "lifted" fifteen sheep from the Sutz-alp, in the Engadine, in a few days, although some oxen joined horns in a serried phalanx to defy the robber. Another destroyed twenty-nine on the Buffalora-alp, in 1858; while a third, in ten days, made away with seventeen at Zernetz. The bear rarely attacks cattle or horses, and when he does, is generally worsted, in spite of his great strength, of which some idea may be formed from the fact that he has been known to pull a cow out of a shed through the roof, and to drag a horse across a deep brook. His usual plan is to spring on the victim, and bite its neck till it sinks from loss of blood. Even goats and sheep he does not always dare to assail openly, preferring to pounce on them in a fog, or to drive them to the edge of a precipice, and then to make prize of those that fall over. Sometimes, however, he will batter in the door of a stable in order to prey upon the goats inside. Bruin's well-known fondness for honey and fruit has often led him to grief. Although his expeditions are seldom prolonged beyond ten or twenty hours from the time he starts from his den, the bear of the Engadine has, within the present century, penetrated at different times into the vineyards of the Pays de Vaud and the Vallais, where his paws are exhibited as trophies in more than one chalet. Ants are relished by the bear as an agreeable acid whet, and are licked up greedily

by his long tongue when he comes to a nest. Occasionally, too, he may be seen sitting gravely by the side of a stream, and knocking the trout dexterously out of the water with his heavy paw. The Swiss bear, however ravenous, never, it is said, attacks a man without provocation. When he meets a peasant, he generally stares at him and then trots off. A story is told of one amiable Grandfather, who, encountering a little Red Ridinghood with a basket of strawberries, quietly helped himself, but did no harm to the girl, who was too much terrified to run away.

On the other hand, however, a Norwegian tourist fell into the bear-pit at Berne three years ago, and next morning his body was found in a dreadfully mangled condition, having been torn to pieces by the bears. Possibly, in falling, he struck upon one of them, and this may have led to a fight. There seems to be a touch of the cannibal about Bruin, for he would eat, or at least kill, his own cubs if the mother did not drive him away by growls and even blows. During the present summer, one of the bears at Berne, when climbing the pole, lost his footing, and falling to the ground was very much hurt. As soon as his companions saw the blood flowing, they seemed to be seized with a sudden fury, and, rushing upon the wretched animal, worried him to death.

According to Fili, the best season for bear-hunting is in the winter, when the footprints on the snow betray his whereabouts, and when he may often be found in a drowsy, languid state. In February, moreover, he casts the skin on the soles of his feet and cannot run quickly. It is a mistake to suppose that he is always slow in his movements; although he does not hurry himself unnecessarily, he can be fleet enough when he chooses, and a man would have some difficulty in out-distancing him. If let alone, he would decline a combat with a human antagonist; yet, when once wounded, or even fired at, his rage is ungovernable, and he will face any odds. Such is the vindictiveness of a bear when roused, that one has been known to follow a hunter, who had shot him, for a whole day, tracking him through woods, and swimming rivers after him. For these reasons, bear-hunters generally go in couples, and the first shot at the bear is fired, if possible, from behind. In fighting with a man, it seems to be the habit of Grandfather Blacktooth to advance on his hind legs; and formerly it was a favourite feat of the Grison sportsmen to close with him, grasping him tightly with the arm round the neck, and thrusting a hand, guarded by a steel gauntlet, down the throat of the animal, and then trying to stab him in the belly. A similar practice used to prevail in Sweden.

There are many stories of dreadful combats conducted in this manner. At Dissentis a bear pursued by a hunter took refuge in a narrow cave on the side of a lofty mountain; the man saw the eyes glaring through the darkness, and fired. A loud groan followed, and then all was still, so he concluded the beast was slain, and went off for assistance to carry the carcase. Return-

ing next day with three companions, he was horrified, on entering the hole, to find the bear alive; it sprang upon him at once, bore him to the ground, and the couple, locked in a life and death struggle, rolled to the brink of a precipice, when a well-directed bullet from one of the others killed the bear, and saved the man's life, which would in any case have been forfeited had not the shot on the previous day broken the beast's teeth. A contest of a ludicrous character occurred at Berne. A lusty young peasant, who had, over and over again, been victor in the annual wrestling matches, inflamed with wine, vowed that he would crown his achievements by challenging a bear. At the moment one was dancing to a tabor in the market-place, and with much persuasion and a heavy bribe he obtained permission from the keeper to try a fall. The two took up their position, and after a little of the usual play, the man tossed his adversary high in the air, and flung him to the ground with a force that would have knocked wind, sense, and probably life, out of any other creature than a bear. That was "one" for the biped; and, according to the rules of the game, Bruin should have released his conqueror and stood up for another bout. Master Blacktooth, however, had notions of his own on that score, and maintaining his hold, "put the bug on" so desperately, that the man would have been suffocated, or squeezed to death, if the keeper and on-lookers had not hastened to the rescue. Fortunately the bear was muzzled, or worse consequences might have ensued.

Everybody has heard of the bears of Berne. Nobody, certainly, can be long in that city without having them brought under his notice in one way or other. There are the colossal bears at the Fribourg gate, and numerous other bears, fantastic alike in gurb and attitude, perched on stoeples, swinging on signs, and stuck about everywhere; there is the procession of bears marching with swords and halberds, to the music of flutes, fiddles, and drums, in the celebrated mechanical clock; and, last, not least, there is the bear-pit which I have already mentioned. The bear gives his name to the city, and supports its arms. In return, the city, in accordance with an ancient tradition which has acquired the sacredness of a law, maintains several living specimens of the animal with which it is so closely identified. A lady once left a legacy of sixty thousand livres for the benefit of the bears, but the French carried this away, and on the restoration of peace the citizens subscribed sixty thousand francs as an endowment for the bear-pit. This capital, however, was further curtailed by the expense of removing their quarters from the inside to the outside of the city, which was rendered necessary by a curious incident. The jail adjoined the pit, and the turnkey was alarmed one morning to find a bear in the cell where, the night before, he had left a man. The prisoner had escaped by a hole in the wall into the fosse, while one of the bears had entered the prison by the same aperture. There are a couple of pits, one for the old bears, and

the other for the rising generation who are to succeed them. The people of Berne are much concerned about their pets, and the death of a "Mutz," or the augmentation of the family, is an event of the deepest interest to the whole city. A bear has been known to live forty-seven years in confinement here, and another to bring forth young after thirty years of age.

Both in Switzerland and in Bavaria there are a number of other places which derive their name from our friend Grandfather Blacktooth, but he is to be found in the former country only in the Engadine, and has, since the beginning of the century, utterly disappeared from the latter, which once swarmed with his family. In the Tyrol the bear still lurks on the flanks of the Ortler, near Gognagog, in the Upper Vintschgau, and in other secluded parts, and descended a few years back even to the vineyards of Meran. The Carpathians are also the haunt of another remnant of the race, which, however, there, as elsewhere in Europe, is rapidly declining. Old Blacktooth will soon be a mere memory of the past, and exist only as a stuffed specimen in museums.

ODD ARMS.

If the moon is the dearest of all created things, the art and science of heraldry is surely the dearest of all the human circle. Still, how some of the arms known in the Herald's College came to be borne, is interesting when illustrative of history, or setting forth the manners of an epoch. Thus, why the four families of Delves, Mackworth, Hawkestone, and Foulthurst, all bore, or bear, the same charge on their coat of arms, and why that charge is the same as the famous Lord Audley's, is a pretty little knightly anecdote, not known to every one; though told in Froissart's best manner. After the battle of Poitiers, wherein Lord Audley so greatly distinguished himself, and was so grievously wounded, the Black Prince solemnly bestowed on him the gift of five hundred marks yearly from his own private revenue: a sum which at that time made a handsome addition to even a lord's possessions. But Lord Audley, mindful of the four squires who had followed him through the thickest of the fight, divided the prince's gift among them, adding the greater grace of leave to quarter his arms with their own, with such difference as should distinguish them. Wherefore, in the coats of all these gentlemen and their descendants, we find somewhere—either at the top, or in the middle, or at the bottom of the shield—"Gules, fretty or;" which, in English, is a red ground cross-barred with gold. To end the story in the good old knightly style:—not to be outdone in generosity, when the Black Prince heard what Lord Audley had done, he gave him a further grant of six hundred marks yearly to be paid out of his Cornish revenues. The "Pelham buckle," so well known in East Sussex, was the badge granted to Sir John de Pelham after the same battle. He and Sir Roger la Warr were

mainly instrumental in the capture of the French king; so Pelham took the buckle of his sword-belt for his cognisance, adding to it a cage—and a knighthood—and Sir Roger la Warr took the crampet, or chape of the sword for his device. The De la Beres have "a ducal coronet or, therefrom issuant a plume of five ostrich feathers per pale argent and azure," a coat given to Sir Richard De la Bere, knight banneret, by Edward the Black Prince, for rescuing him at Crecy from a great danger. It was at this same battle that Edward himself assumed the ostrich feathers and the coronet, and the modest motto, "Ich Dien," as he and all subsequent Princes of Wales have borne them, in commemoration of his capture of John of Bohemia.

Sir Christopher Seton, ancestor of the Earls of Wintoun, rescued Robert Bruce from the English at the battle of Methven, 1306. For this the king gave him his sister, the Lady Christian, in marriage; and, among other charges, a sword supporting a falling crown within a double tressure. Robert's heart went out to Jerusalem, as we all know, under the care of Sir James Douglas, who was killed by the way. The Douglas family thereupon took as their coat of arms a human heart royally crowned, on a field of silver.

The supporters of the Earl of Errol are two husbandmen, carrying an ox yoke. In 980, when the Danes invaded the island, there was an engagement at Longcarty, near Perth, in which Kenneth the Third was routed. John de Luz and his sons were ploughing in a field hard by. Seeing the Scots flee, John and his sons put themselves in a narrow pass, and stopped them with the ox gear, bidding them turn back for a parcel of loons and cowards. They did so; and the Danes, thinking it a reinforcement, took fright and yielded. Kenneth gave John de Luz as much land in Gowrie as a falcon, flying from his wrist, should measure before it perched. Hence the crest of the family now representing the old ploughman—a falcon rising—and the two husbandmen for supporters. The Earls of Kinnoul, a younger branch, allude to the same incident in their motto, "Renovate animo." Keith, Earl Marischal, bears "azure on a chief or, three pallets gules." An ancestor of the Keiths proved himself a more than ordinarily brave warrior in a battle near Dundee, when Canus, the Danish general, was killed. Kenneth—the friend of the De Luz—charmed with his valour, dipped his fingers in the blood of the Dane, and drew three stripes, or pallets, on the top of the shield: hence the arms.

Jane Lane, of Staffordshire, saved the life of Charles the Second by her wit and courage. Her family took as their crest, in perpetual memory of that fateful ride, "a demi-horse salient argent, spotted dark grey, sustaining with his forefeet a loyal crown." Penderell too, and Careless—of Carlos, as Charles would always call him afterwards—did him good service at the oak of Bosobel; and Charles gave them both, as an augmentation of their arms, an oak-tree and three royal crowns, with a difference.

Tripp, of the Howard stock, has borne since the time of Henry the Fifth, both the name of Tripp and a scaling-ladder in bend, for his coat armour. "This achievement was given unto my Lord Howard's fifth son at the siege of Bullogne. King Harry the Fifth being there, asked how they took the town and castle? Howard answered, 'I tripp'd up the walls.' Saith his majesty, 'Tripp shall be thy name, no longer Howard,' and honoured him with the scaling-ladder for his bend." The Lloyds of Milfield, Cardigan, have three scaling-ladders and a bloody spear for their charges. They are the descendants of Kadivor ap Dynewal, who, in the time of Henry the Second, recaptured the castle of Cardigan from the Earl of Clare by scalade, for which he was enriched by Rhys, prince of South Wales, and given this coat.

Sometimes coat armour follows an office, not a race; as in the arms of the lord of the Manor of Stoke-Lyne, Oxon, which have ever a hawk as one of the supporters, no matter what the family arms may be. This came about through Charles the First, who, when he held his parliament at Oxford, received some slight service from the lord of Stoke-Lyne Manor, for which he offered to knight him; but the gentleman refused, craving permission, instead, to place his family arms on the breast of a hawk, which was granted in perpetuity to the lord, whoever he may be. And sometimes coats and supporters evidence successful resistance to royalty itself, as with the Bulstrodes of Bulstrode, Bucks, who have, as their cognisance, a bull's head erased, in memory of the gallant stand made against the Norman gentleman whom William the Conqueror sent with a body of men to take what was afterwards the Bulstrode estate from its lawful Saxon owner. The lawful Saxon owner resisted, and his friends, the neighbouring Saxons, helped, specially the ancestors of the Penns and Hampdens. Having no horses, they mounted the farm bulls, and rode out against the dismayed besiegers, and so terrified them that they turned and fled. When the king heard of this, he sent for the victorious rebel, under a safe-conduct, to court; whither he and his seven sons came, mounted on bulls as in their famous sally; and royalty was so delighted thereat, that he gave him his estate in peace, and added the name of Bulstrode for a perpetual remembrance of his feat.

Many of our family arms are meant as the most execratic puns. Thus, the Botreux' "gryphton" of Cornwall gave up their fine old coat, a blue gryphon on a golden field, for three toads; because botru is Cornish for a toad. The Shelleys bear wheel-shells, and the Falconers falcons; Godolphin has a dolphin embowed for his crest; and Dolphinley, and Dolphinton, and the Brownes of Dolinton, in Lanarkshire, all have dolphins in some form or other. So have the Ffrenches of Castelfrench; and so has the Earl of Cassilis, who, at the Eglintoun tournament, appeared as the Knight of the Dolphin according to his crest; but these are not puns.

Whalley Abbey in Lancashire had three whales, each with a crosier in his mouth; the Lucys have a pike or luce; Lord Comyn a gerb, or sheaf of barley or cummin; Corbet shows a raven, a corbean, or corbie; the Arundels figure themselves in swallows (hirondelles); Heiz has a hedgehog (herisson); Brooke and Gray have the badger, the "brock" or "grey" in some counties; the Mowbrays bear the mulberry as their cognisance; the Gobions or Gobyons have everywhere gudgeons, or gobjons; and the Gorges, gorges or whirlpools—found in the Russell arms by their descent from the Gorges. The Lorraines make an anagram of themselves in the alerion—an heraldic eagle without beak or feet; Sir Fisher Tench of Low Leyton has tench for his surname, and a dolphin for Fisher; the Breames of Essex have golden breams; three chub-fish typify Chobbe, as Lord Dorner shows on his arms by right of being a Chobbe by descent; the Roaches, or Roches, have roach; the Fishers of Staffordshire have a kingfisher for both coat and crest; Nicholas Breakspere (Pope Adrian the Fourth) bore a broken spear; and our own divine Williams had a silver spear on a sable ground.

"Non bos in lingua"—I have no bull upon my tongue—I will take no bribe, alluding to the Greek didrachm, which had a bull as its impress, was the motto of a barrister; was he Irish? Dr. Cox Macro of Cambridge was fitted with the motto "Cocks may crow;" a tobaccoist took "Quid rides?" and the Company of Wire drawers have "*Amicitiam trahit amor*"—"Love draws friendship." The Gurneys take the gurnard; but in Cornwall, where the gurnard is known as the tub fish, the Tubbes adopt it for themselves. The Troutbecks, from that sweet valley by Windermere, bear three trout "fretted," and their crest is a head on a wreath of trout; while Otterbournes, Sprats, Herrings, Mackrells, Whittings, Soles, and Turbots, Talbots, Weares, Griffins, and every other name under heaven which can be emblemised in beast, fish, or thing, finds its likeness in the annals of the "canting" or punning arms.

The Hightmores, of Highmoor, Cumberland, bear "argent a cross-bow erect between four moorcocks sable, their legs, beaks, and combs gules." The Middlemores, of the same family, bear the cross-bow and three moorcocks; and the Lowmores, still the same family, have the cross-bow and only two moorcocks.

Lord Stourton has six fountains on a bend in his coat of arms, meaning the river Stour, which rises from six fountains or springs. The bend is his park paling. So the Humes of Ninewells, the same family as David, the historian, bear a silver lion rampant, with nine wells or springs set round the bordure.

"Strike, Dakyns! the devil's in the Hempt!" is the inexpressible motto of the Dakyns family of Derbyshire; while the Martins of Dorsetshire had for a crest an ape, with this motto: "He who looks at Martin's ape, Martin's ape shall look at him."

The crest of the Dudleys of Northampton-

shire is a woman's head, helmeted, the hair dishevelled, the bosom bare, and the throat-latch down. The manner in which they obtained this crest was in this wise: The father of Agnes Hotot quarrelled with Ringsdale, his neighbour, about some land, and as they could in no wise come to terms, it was agreed that they should fight it out, meeting on a strip of neutral ground, and settling the claim according to their muscular development. When the day came, father Hotot was ill in bed, unable to meet his adversary. Agnes, unwilling that he should lose his claim or suffer in honour, armed herself cap-a-pie, mounted her father's horse, and went to the place of meeting, where she fought so valiantly that Ringsdale was soon unhorsed. As he lay on the ground, she loosened the stay or throat-latch of her helmet, let down her hair, and bared her neck, to show him that he had been conquered by a woman. She married a Dudley in 1395, and gave this memorial crest to her family. The Lyons of Strathmore have a lady, too, as a crest, holding in her hand a royal thistle; granted to them on the occasion of Sir John Lyon's marriage with the Lady Jane, daughter of King Robert the Second.

The Moors gave many a coat-armour and cognisance to our valiant crusaders. In the year of our Lord 1098, says Leland, "Corbarrant, admiral to Soudan of Perce, was fought with at Antioche, and discomfited by the Christians. The night cunning on yu the chace of this bataille, and waxing dark, the Christians being four miles from Antioche, God, willing the saulté of the Christians, showed a white star or molette of five pointes on the Christen host, which to every mannes sighte did lighte and arrest upon the standard of Albrey de Vere, there shynyng excessively." Wherefore the De Vere family bore for their arms in the twelfth century, "Quarterly gules and or, in the first quarter a star or mullet of five pointes or." They used this star also as a badge. "The Erle of Oxford's men had a starre, with streames both before and behind, on their liverys."

If the Martins bear an ape for their crest, so do the Fitzgeralds, Earls of Kildare (Dukes of Leinster now); with two apes for supporters: emblems taken from the strange event which befel the father of John, the first earl, who was taken out of his cradle by a baboon kept on the premises for sport, and dandled on the housetop. The beast, however, meant love not mischief, and brought the babe down safe, after having frightened the household into fits; hence the family took an ape as their crest, and two apes for their supporters, with "Crom a boo!"—"I will burn," for their motto. The Vaughans bear "sable; a chevron between two children's heads coupé at the shoulders argent; their perukes or; enwrapped about the necks with as many snakes proper." This is to tell the world that once a little Vaughan was born with a snake wreathed round its neck, which you may believe or not, according to your pleasure. Maclellan, Lord Kirkcubright, bears for crest a right arm, the hand grasping a dagger with a

human head thereon. This he got from a strange coincidence of might and right. He was the dispossessed heir of Bombie—an estate which, for some reason or other, James the Second had taken from his father—when a band of Irish marauders came over and ravaged Galloway; and to the slayer of their chief James promised the estate and lands of Bombie. Maclellan went forth on the venture, slew the bandit, and so came to his own again. Of less rude, if of less noble, origin are the three combs of the Ponsonby arms, marking the descent of the noble holders from the Conqueror's barber; and of strangely misunderstood-origin and import is the bloody hand of the baronet and his order. The red hand was simply the sign of the province of Ulster; and when James the First created his new order of baronets, and sent them out to subdue and colonise the province, he gave them the red hand of the O'Neils in token of their conquest.

The Stuarts of Hartley Mauduit bear a lion rampant, "debruised" by a ragged staff. The famous ancestor of the family, Sir Alexander, encountered a lion in the presence of Charles the Sixth of France; in the fray his sword broke short, whereupon he tore off a limb of a tree, and with this ragged staff alone laid the beast dead at his feet: an act of strength and courage so pleasing to the king, that he gave him this "augmentation." The next story is not so pleasant, telling, as it does, of disgrace, not of honour. The Davenports of Cheshire bear a man's head cut off below his shoulders, with a halter round his neck; a crest borne ever since the time when a Davenport was taken prisoner in one of the York and Lancaster faction fights, and spared execution on condition that he and all his line should adopt this crest in memory and in token. Worse than this is the "demi-negro proper, manacled with a rope," which Sir John Hawkins received from Queen Elizabeth, in honour of his having so usefully enslaved and manacled the negro. He would not have much relished the result of his work if he had lived to see it as it is at the present day, and would have rather had a white man's hand breaking the black man's chains, than the rope and the manacle, as his cognisance. But times change, and not only we, but moralities change with them.

Remnants of old classical stories meet us in heraldry. The arms of the city of Glasgow figure a salmon holding a ring in his mouth, a tree with a bird perched thereon, and a big bell hanging thereto. This assemblage is to commemorate the story of a lady who had lost her ring in the river, but whose jealous husband would hear of nothing but lovers and love-tokens; whereupon the lady, with many prayers and tears, did "mean" herself to St. Kentigern if but he would show her innocence; and St. Kentigern sent on the hook of a certain fisherman a fine fat salmon, which, when the lady's cook opened to dress it, disclosed the lost ring, to the complete restoration of the lady's name, and the repetition of the old classic story of

Polycrates, and the still older Eastern myth of Solomon and the evil genii. And in speaking for the last time of fish, we may state that several Swiss and German families bear for arms fish skeletons only; which look as uncomfortable as the arms "adumbrated," or only traced in outline, in use in old times to show that all the substance, that is the land and the tenements, had departed, and only the empty title remained.

The manner of bearing the coat armour—or to speak correctly, of charging the field—varied according to merit; all things not being equally honourable; for even two colours (tenné and sanguine) are "staind" or disgraceful, and the arms of abatement were known to every knight as the worst punishment, short of personal violence, that could be made for unknightly vices in those days. Each charge and every position meant something. The pale was a park paling (first borne by Hugh, Lord of Hinckley, high steward to Henry the First), but not to be confounded with the "party per pale" of blazoning; the chevron was a house-top, and old Legh, in his *Accidents of Armorie*, speaks of one "bearing three chevronells; the ancestors of this hath builded three grete houses in one province;" the cross leaves no room for doubt that it came originally from the crusades; the canton is a thing cantonnée or cornered; but no one knows quite what is the saltire, heralds being divided as to its meaning. Gutée, or sprinkled, came originally from the Duke of Anjou, King of Sicily, who, after the loss of that island, appeared at a tournament with a black shield sprinkled with water to indicate tears for his loss. Gutée de sang was when the shield was blood spotted; and gutée de poix when it was splashed with the burning pitch which it was the custom for the besieged to fling down from the castle gates. Those roundlets or plates of all colours so often seen, also mean different things. They are bezants or Byzantine golden coins; plates or silver coins; torteaux—tortellys, or little cakes, emblematic of plenty and representing* bread; pommes or apples; hurts or whortlicberries; pellets or ogresses—meaning the pileta or leaden heads of blunt arrows used for killing deer but saving the skin; golpes or wounds (five golpes are the five wounds of Christ); oranges; and guzes or eyeballs; according as they are gold, silver, red, green, blue, black, purple, orange, or sanguine. Even women—though not allowed to bear a crest, seeing they could not wear it in its origin, as the ensign of estate and name on the helmet, and only suffered to take their husband's or father's "cote armure" under certain restrictions—even they had a special charge assigned them for good offices; as in the "flasques" or "voiders," those pieces hollowed out of the sides of the shield to represent the hollowed arm-holes of the surcoat, the sleeveless or voided garment

worn in the time of Richard the Second. Which flasques were granted to gentlewomen as a reward for good deeds rendered to prince or princess. This was in days when heraldry meant a living thing, and before the times of such irreverent knaves as William and Christopher Lakyns, makers of false pedigrees and dealers in false coats, who, so long ago as the reign of Queen Elizabeth, fitted over a hundred families with pretended genealogies. William lost his ears for the offence on his first conviction, and was imprisoned twice.

There is a meaning, and was once a beginning, to even royal arms; which seem as if they had always been what they are now, and which it would cost a small rebellion to change.

The genesis of the royal arms of England is rather curious. William the Conqueror, William Rufus, and Henry the First, all bore two lions, or "leopards, passant guardant," says tradition; Stephen, two centaurs, with lions' bodies instead of horses', also traditional; Henry the Second continued the more ancient lions or leopards, adding a third for his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine and Guyenne, which again is traditional: (but the fact that Richard the First so bore them is established). Henry's badge was a carbuncle, "the gem escarbuncle which is found within the saphir," and which a dragon kept from the pollution of profane fingers. His device was a "genet" (viverra genetia) passing between two sprigs of broom, which seems to have been originally meant as a mere play upon words: "Il portoit ung Genet entre deux Plantes de Geneste," as the old phrase went. In 1235 the Emperor Frederick sent three leopards to Henry the Third, in token of armorial bearings which he bore. His motto was "Ke ne dune, ke ne tunc, ne pret ke desire"—"he who gives not what he has, takes not what he desires." Edward the First had for his badge a rose, the flower gold, the stalk green; on the reverse of his great seal is a bear standing against a tree; and on his coat armour he joined his wife's arms by "dimidiation." Edward the Third quartered the arms of France, as has been said, the three lions on the first and fourth, and a field "semé" of fleur-de-lys on the second and third. His supporters were a gold lion on the right, on the left a silver falcon, "membered or," that is with beak, claws, &c., in gold. His devices were many. One was the stock of a tree, with two green sprigs issuant, to show his flourishing line; another was a griffin, which he bore on his private seal; a third was an eagle, a device granted with great pomp to William Montacute, Earl of Salisbury; a fourth was a sword erect on a chapeau, the blade enfiled with three fleur-de-lys, in token of his French successes; and embroidered on the shield and tunic, in which he went to the Canterbury tournament of 1349, was this motto, with a white swan for a cognisance:

Hay! hay! the wythe swan,
By Godes soule I am thy man!

His son, the Black Prince, bore "a sunne arysing out of the clowdes, betokening that,

* Dame Julian Berners said it should be "wastel breide," the finest bread made, from the French gasteau or gâteau.

although his noble courage and princely valour had hitherto been hid and obscured from the world, now he was arysing to glory and honour in France." We have said before that it was at the battle of Crécy he assumed the three ostrich feathers and coronet, which he had taken from John of Bohemia, with the motto "Ich Dien," as we yet have them. Richard the Second had a white hart and a white falcon, also two angels for the supporters of his shield, which he laid on a white hart collared and chained, in memory of his mother's device, the white hind; and which was not unlike the white hart issuing from a tower, of the Irish badge. He was fond of this device; for, in the ninth year of his reign, we find him pawning certain jewels, "à la guyse de cerfs blancs," and in the twenty-second he had, as one of the items of his wardrobe, a sword-belt and sheath of red velvet, embroidered with white harts crowned, and with rosemary branches. Another favourite device was a sun in his splendour, from his father's badge; another, a white falcon, which forty knights and forty esquires bore at a certain tournament; and another was the planta genista, the broom, with the opened pods of which—the seeds escaping—his robe in the monumental effigy at Westminster Abbey is strewn.

Henry the Fourth, the first of the House of Lancaster, bore the same coat of arms, with a difference: he reduced the fleur-de-lys, which had been semé or scattered, to five; and his supporters were an antelope and a swan, both of which came from the Bohuns by his wife. He bore this same swan and antelope embroidered on blue and green velvet, when he entered the lists against Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, who, on his side, and in allusion to his name, bore the mulberry-tree. Henry also bore a fox-tail "dependent proper;" emblematic of the old saying, "if the lion's skinne were too short, piece it with a fox's tail"—add craft to courage. The red nose he inherited from his grandfather, and the double SS was also his device. Henry the Fifth still further reduced the fleur-de-lys on his shield to three, in imitation of the French king; he ensigned the arms of England with an imperial crown, and took for his supporters a lion and an antelope. On his tomb in Westminster Abbey an antelope and a swan are chained to a beacon; one of his favourite devices; meaning either that he would be a light to guide his people unto all good and honour, or else in token of his many hard wars with France, "his sudden and hot alarms." He too affected the fox's tail; for he gave Walter Hungerford the castle and barony of Homet in Normandy, on condition that he and his heirs should pay the king suit and service at the "Castle of Roan," bringing him one lance with a fox's tail dependent. Another of his badges was a fleur-de-lys crowned, and his motto was "Ung sans plus." Henry the Sixth chose a panther, semé of roundlets of all colours, from the Beauforts; and two white ostrich feathers in saltire. His

motto was "Dieu et mon Droit;" his supporters two antelopes, afterwards two angels; his colours were white and blue; and his distinctive badge the red rose of Lancaster.

Edward the Third, the first of the House of York, quartered like his predecessors, but chose a lion and a black bull "armed or" for his supporters. His first badge was a black dragon, gold clawed, and his device was a falcon on a fetter-lock, the fetter-lock open. This was in allusion to the device of his great-grandfather, Edmund of Langley, first Duke of York, "who, after the king his father had endowed him with the castle of Fotheringhay, which he new built in form and fashion of a fetter-lock, assumed to himself his father's falcon, and placed it on a fetter-lock, implying thereby that he was locked up from the hope and possibility of the kingdom. Upon a time, finding his sons beholding this device set upon a window, asked what was Latin for a fetter-lock, whereupon the father said, 'If you cannot tell me I will tell you: Hic, hæc, hoc, et taceatis,' revealing to them his meaning, and advising them to be silent and quiet, as God knoweth what may come to pass. This his great-grandchild, Edward the Fourth, reported, and bore it, and commanded that his younger son, royal Duke of York, should use the device of a fetter-lock, but opened, as Roger Wall, a herald of that time, reporteth." He wore the white rose, being the badge of Mortimer, Earl of March, in whose right he had the earldom also; but after the battle of Mortimer's Cross, where he saw three suns in one, he added golden rays to the rose.

Richard the Third had two boars for his supporters, and on the day of his coronation thirteen thousand pigs were worked on fustian, and borne by his faction. The old distich—

The rat, the cat, and Lovel the dog,
Ruled all England under the hog,

meant this device, no more, said the defendants, solemnly ignoring well-fitting caps. Edward the Fourth had the lion and the bull for his supporters, a white rose "in solid," and a pyramid of feathers coming out of a crown for his badges, and his colours were murrey and blue.

Henry the Seventh, the first of the great line of Tudor, kept to the old shield, but changed the supporter to the red dragon of Cadwallader, and a white greyhound. In the twenty-third year of his reign he ordered that a standard, bearing a red dragon, should be placed in Westminster Abbey. It was to be of red sarcenet embroidered with gold, its tongue was to be continually moving, and its eyes were to be of sapphires. The greyhound he got from the Nevilles, his wife's grandmother's family. Among other badges, he bore the dun cow, in allusion to Guy, Earl of Warwick, from whom he had descended through the Beauchamps. He bore the crowned portcullis of Somerset, and the roses of the rival houses parti pale, that is, split down the middle, one half red and the other white; afterwards the white rose was set within the red, as we bear it to the present day. As

he was crowned king on the field of battle, with Richard's crown found in a hawthorn-bush, so he bore the crown and bush, with the letters H. R. and H. E., as may be seen in the windows of Westminster Abbey chapel.

Henry the Eighth omitted the greyhound, turned the red dragon to the left side, and took the royal lion, which had been his crest, for his right or dexter supporter; some say the left was a silver bull, crowned, hooped, horned, &c., "or," others a silver cock, combed, wattled, and legged, "or," holding in his beak a slip of flowers, golden with green leaves. Among his other devices, were a flame of fire, and an armed leg cut off at the thigh, the foot passing through three crowns of gold, typifying his tramping on the triple crown of the Pope. He had two mottoes, "Dieu et mon Droit," and "Semper vivat in ceterno," which he caused to be placed on the valance of a certain splendid tent of his, the summit of which was ornamented by his royal beasts, the red dragon, the antelope, the lion, and the greyhound.

Catherine of Aragon had for her badges the rose and pomegranate conjoined; and a sheaf of arrows; her supporters were a gold lion and a black eagle with a golden nimbus round its head, and golden claws. Poor Anna Bullen had a leopard for her right hand, and for her left a male griffin, all barbed and spiked with gold spikes. Jane Seymour bore the lion and unicorn. Anne of Cleves had a black lion; on her wedding-ring was this posy, "God send me wel to keep," and her device was an escarbuncle. Catherine Howard had a fine coat; and Catherine Parr a lion, with an unknown beast chained and breathing flames. Her device was a maiden's bust issuing from a triple rose, red white and red.

Edward the Sixth had the same shield as his father—his supporters still the lion and red dragon. His badge was a cannon proper, pouring forth flame and smoke; also a sun in its splendour; and his motto was "Idem per diversa." Mary bore the eagle to the right with a slip of pomegranate below, and the lion to the left, over a rose-branch. Her motto was "Veritas temporis filia." Her badges were a white and red rose, impaled with a sheaf of arrows; a pomegranate, in memory of her mother; a sword erect on an altar, with the motto, "Pro ara et regia custodia." Elizabeth went back to the lion and dragon (whence Rouge Dragon one of the pursuivants). She bore three shields on her coat armour: one had the arms of England and France quarterly—this was to the right; to the left was a shield with the Irish harp; at the base, the shield for Wales, quarterly red and gold, with a lion in each field countercharged, that is of the colour opposite to the field. Her motto was "Semper eadem;" her livery was white and green, and her favourite badge like her mother's, a falcon with a crown and sceptre. But she had many badges: too many to enumerate.

James the First was the first to bear the royal

arms in any way like our present. In the first and fourth quarters were the lions of England and the lilies of France; in the second the red lion of Scotland within his tressure fleur-de-lys; in the third the Irish harp. His motto was "Beati pacifici;" his crests were the red lion of Scotland, the English lion passant guardant, and the fleur-de-lys, and his supporters were the lion and unicorn; his device was a red rose and thistle "dimidiated," and crowned. Charles the First bore the same coat of arms, with "Justitia et veritas" as his motto for Scotland. On a piece struck at Holyrood, June 18, 1633, to commemorate his coronation, was figured a large thistle, with many stalks and heads, and "Hinc nostræ crevere rosæ" as the legend—from the Scotch thistle came his right to the roses of England. His state motto was as ours, "Dieu et mon Droit." Charles the Second and James the Second bore the same. William and Mary added the arms of Orange; William's motto being "Je mentionnray;" on his seal for Scotland, "Favente Deo." When he landed, he had a banner with the royal legend "Dieu et mon Droit"—"And I will maintain it," below: on another, "The Protestant Religion and Liberties of England." In a certain portrait, wherein he is painted in the habit of the Garter, on the edge of the mantle is written "Venendo restituet rem." Anne had for her motto "Semper eadem;" and went back from the blue and orange of William and Mary to the yellow and red of the Stuarts. She changed the royal arms, impaling England and Scotland in the first and fourth, giving the second to the lilies of France, and the third to the Irish harp. George the First added a fourth quartering of his own, the Hanoverian arms, and resumed the "Dieu et mon Droit," with the lion and unicorn as the supporters; though before he was king he had had two savages to perform this office. In this manner the royal arms continued until 1816, when George the Third omitted the French lilies, and put the Hanoverian quartering into an escutcheon. The only alteration to which, since then, has been the omission of that shield: when our present Queen came to the throne, and her uncle—King of Hanover by the Salic law—took the White Horse to himself.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER VI. THE SISTERS.

THE house in Raglan-terrace, where the Manuels lived, though small, was as fresh as a rose—as perhaps a white rose; and though it could not display a plaster eagle, or an icc-pail of the same material—as some of its companions did—it some way seemed to be the least flaunting of the whole row. There was a little garden in front and another behind, where the grass and the walks did not seem to suggest the idea of tufts of green cotton and dry sand glued on to a deal board, as the other pleasure-grounds did.

Their little drawing-rooms were fitted out with all the gaudy decorations and bits of clean showy finery usually constructed for houses made "to let." The ceiling and paper were about as white as ceiling or paper could be got for the money, so that it seemed as if it would be a relief to the eye to look at them through smoked glasses. The gilding of the moulding and looking-glasses were of the strongest and fiercest yellow that could be got for the money, and the radiating fireplace, having holiday during the summer, flashed back a distorted picture of the room, like the glass over its head, and was also about the best polished steel that could be got for the money. So with the knobs of the walnut chairs and the walnut headlands that projected from under the tablecloths, and the prominent portions of the rockery in the middle of the room (which was in reality an ottoman), all of which shone with splashes of light, and were only now getting over their primeval stickiness.

The effect of this air of stark and grim luxury the Manuel family had unconsciously neutralised by the dispersion here and there of many tasteful articles of their own. They broke up the stiff regimental ranks in which the furniture had been drawn up, and brought about a graceful orderly "no-order." In a very short time the contract magnificence was happily overlaid and tempered, and the gloss rubbed away to the dimness of genteeler life.

A large lodger family next door, eight or nine strong in children (with a father in a white

waistcoat and his hands under coat-tails, seen with an air of pride upon his door-steps during the evenings, who had ingeniously turned to account every corner cupboard, and might reasonably fancy he had hired a rabbit-warren at so many guineas a month), looking from their plate-glass window, began to know and take interest in the Manuel family: in the mother, whom they saw at times wandering listlessly in the garden; and in the two sisters, who went forth and came in from their walking. The nurses and heads of various sizes which were always permanently in the window, as if a procession were expected every moment, made no account of the small-featured timid mother; nor did the cold-eyed, rough-mannered son, who went in and out making the gate clatter behind him, excite their interest. They were mere lay figures; but as the two sisters appeared, infantine cries were raised, and chubby fingers pointed.

Black was the dress of all the family. With the mother and son it seemed the stiff conventional mourning, ugly and appropriate; but with the sisters it became the flowing drapery of scarf and lace shawl which fell about them in graceful folds. The figure of the elder, and her rich heavy hair, which she set off with a deep scarlet geranium, wrung toleration, if not admiration, from a London maid who was put away in a very high burrow next door; but the chubby fingers were pointed with more favour at the younger girl.

She seemed to be a child almost like themselves, and whatever shadow of sorrow was in the house must have passed by her. They saw her tripping out after her sister, always a *little* late; and her voice supplied music for her walk, which was more a dance than a walk. She was shorter than her sister, and her face was small and round, and so bright that it seemed to be set in her airy bonnet, like a bouquet of soft coloured flowers in its border. She was very young, and she seemed to have all the delicate bloom of the flower after which she was named. She was all softness, and tenderness, and love, and was made to sit the whole day in the warm sun of life; rather, those about her felt that she should be reared carefully in a sort of social hot-house, as a flower they might visit and watch carefully. In all the cold greys and browns of that mansion, she was a bright patch of colour. The

cold didactic east winds, the blasts of reproof, and chilling precepts, "all for her good," they found were to be kept carefully from her. She was not to know the rough things of life, or she would fade, and the stalk wither and droop. Thus, when there was destruction and general break-up going on all about them, they stood close round her, in a circle as it were, and affectionately prevented her from seeing. There was an amiable confederacy to this end. The brother was rough and sour; the mother querulous, with every nerve in her system shattered by sorrows; and the sister, impatient and impetuous, though full of strong affections—which were not workable elements on the whole. Yet the family fused them all together for her sake, smiled for her sake, talked lightly with aching hearts for her sake, and concealed all their scars and writhings for her sake. She was so pretty, so trusting, so full of little endearing ways, that dark rooms became lit up with a flash when she entered, and foreheads overcast with black clouds cleared suddenly.

And yet she was not one of the flighty grown-up children who at twenty still find life a toy-shop. She was what is called "steady," and took her share in the family duties.

The father in his white waistcoat, from his door-step, thought the elder sister "a finer woman," but the current of infantine public opinion ran in favour of the younger girl. Stray skirmishers of the family, out under the command of the London nurse, had met her, and had been spoken to, and on one day news was passed forward from burrow to burrow of the warren, that she had put back her tiny parasol, stooped over, and bent her bright face close to that of the then infant's of the family. There were two uncouth boys, whose habitual occupation seemed to be hanging their heavy heads, and dealing with their fingers as if they were sticks of barley-sugar, and whose faces began to rage and glow awfully whenever her name was mentioned, as though a blister had been newly taken off. She was seen when going out turning back at the gate to wave salutations to the windows of the drawing-room with her tiny parasol, and the bright round face breaking from its gossamer bonnet as from a shell, flashed back pretty signals of acknowledgment. And the pretty picture presently drew swarms to the windows next door, and stolid faces, mostly busy with human sugar-stick, lined the plate-glass as in an amphitheatre. The respective maids, who had early interchanged cards, talked the matter over; and through these channels authentic information trickled through the family, as it were down the stones of a weir, and which was a favourable testimonial to Miss Violet's merits. "She was like a child in the 'ouse," said the Manuel's Lady to her friend. "And we all looks on her as a child. The mother would mope herself away into her grave, only for 'er." Mr. Louis was a rough, uncivil kind of gentleman, "with no manners," but Miss Violet some way

"kep" him in order. It was added that this youth, though only twenty, had the "ed" of a man of fifty. As for Miss Manuel, she was a fine stately creature to look at, "for all the world like a married woman," and was, in addition, like one of the famous unmarried "picturs at 'Amp-ton Court."

The details of their inner life, though greedily inquired after, were of course not so full and satisfactory. Thus they would have been glad to have had a sketch of the little night-piece in the drawing-room of Number Three after Fernor's visit. The mustard-coloured blinds had been pulled down, plate-glass was happily out of sight, and their lamp had been lighted. Mrs. Manuel was busy with some needlework, which, as reproductive labour, and tested on principles of political economy, could not hold its own in the market, but which, taken as a source of entertainment and of occupation for the mind, brought back large returns. The brother, a youth who had been fitted out with no profession, had shown a repugnance to entering the underground wine-vaults where his father had spent so much of his life, as it were down in a mine. He had no titular occupation, and went about "mooning;" protested often against his hard fate in not having been put early to a profession, and at times was subject to curious fits of gloom, as though he had been deeply injured by his family. On this night he was at the table, busy with a pencil, absently sketching odd grotesque heads, and ladies with veils and dogs—an occupation with which he very often soothed his feelings, injured at not being "fitted with a profession."

Miss Manuel had been at her piano, and her sister, in gayer spirits even than usual, had been getting up, and sitting down, and going out of the room to fetch something, until the constant rustle of her silk dress made the youth, who was sketching, impatient.

"Do, Violet, sit down or stand up; fix on one or the other," he said.

The sister looked after her affectionately. "We must excuse her," she said. "I know what is in her head, and what she is thinking of."

Her mother, whose fingers were busily crossing a pair of steel weapons in carte and tierce, as though they were rapiers, looked over at her too. "When the two gentlemen were here to-day," she said, "I saw it too."

The young girl, who had been still getting up to search for many things, and falling unconsciously into innumerable graceful attitudes, stopped short, and looking away from them shyly, and with colour rising on her cheeks like a tide, said, by way of protest, "Such nonsense! I am sure I don't know what you all mean."

"Ah!" said her sister, greatly pleased, "I saw to-day what an impression you had made on him. His distress was almost amusing. He never took his eye off the other. He was in a most uncomfortable state all the time."

"Now, Pauline, *such* nonsense!" said the young girl, still in protest. "I am sure I don't mind him in the least."

The brother suddenly dropped his pencil, jumped up, and caught her by the wrists. "Do you believe *that*?" he said to the audience, and turning her round to the light. "Is that like blushing?"

He was the detective of the family, and in truth the tide was surging up violently in her round cheeks.

She shook herself free, with a pretty little pettishness. "When you are all looking at me so," she said, "it is very hard for one not to get red. He scarcely spoke a word to me."

"I wish he *did* talk a little more," said her brother.

"Except when he gets upon horses," said her sister, "and then he is fluent enough."

"No, indeed," said Violet, in a low voice. "I think he hates the subject; for he said to me, that to be riding a horse round a drawing-room—"

"That was Captain Fermor?" said the detective, quietly, so as not to scare her from making the admission.

"Yes," she said.

There was an awful pause for a few seconds. The elder sister bent down her head in deep distress. "We have been speaking of Hanbury," he said. "Who were *you* thinking of?" (Another pause.) "Upon my word, we *do* make discoveries."

In the other faces there was something like pain and consternation. The eldest sister's foot beat impatiently on the ground. The brother sketched with fierce strokes, and put in vindictive shading. The young girl stood there at the bar, guilty and penitent, her face glowing like one of Mr. Turner's sunsets.

"So *this* is what is going on," he said. "This is what we are blushing for."

But her sister, who saw that she was in real trouble and sadly humiliated, hurried up to assist. "Stop, Louis," she said. "We are always teasing her, and I saw that you laid a trap for poor Violet."

The brother shook his head. "She would not have fallen into it, if she had—"

A hasty rustle interrupted this sentence. Violet had fled to her room. The whole was of ridiculously small moment; but, somehow, it left a blank feeling among them; for they were all bound to Hanbury, and were his sworn and most affectionate allies. They were disappointed, and with a grotesque mixture of feeling, were half inclined to laugh and half inclined to despond. While she was away, they talked Captain Fermor over.

"The very look of him," said Louis, "is enough. I never felt so inclined to quarrel with any man. As he passes in the street he almost sneers at you. The other day I could have turned back and struck him."

"I am afraid," said Pauline, hesitatingly, "he

has cast his concealed eye upon Violet. He is so vain and empty, and so idle in this place."

"He had better not bring his idleness here," said her brother. "I suppose he would like nothing better than amusing himself in this house. If he comes here again, I'll insult him."

"Nonsense, Louis. You must not be violent. That sort of thing does not do in this age. No; the acquaintance is scarcely even begun, so we can drop it quietly, and without any fuss."

At tea-time Violet was obliged to come down and present herself, which she did with a pretty confusion, and a wish to hide her head in the ground—under the gay contract carpet, if *that* were possible—like a pursued ostrich. An act of indemnity, however, had been passed. Later, however, Captain Fermor was skilfully introduced, without causing alarm, and depreciated with all the powers of his combined enemies. He was ridiculed and jeered at, sacrificed in a hundred different ways. His sayings of the day were collected and set in a comic light. They were thinking how well contempt can kill, and went to bed that night convinced that they had happily succeeded in making him appear utterly contemptible in Miss Violet's eyes. Most probably they had; for she was seen to laugh very often, especially when her brother sent round a very broad caricature of the wretched Fermor, very cleverly drawn.

CHAPTER VII. THE NIGHT BEFORE THE STEEPLE-CHASE.

THE National Eastport Race was fixed for a certain Tuesday. Inland, some five miles away, there was a broad tract of rather shaggy country, ragged as a well-worn hair trunk, and broken up in swellings here and there, known, in short, to agricultural men as hopelessly "bad" land. But it did famously for a rough race-course.

Some of the military gentlemen, with a very skilful person, named "J. Madden, Esq.," who seemed to be always generated specially a couple of days before every race—an amphibious species, almost wholly professional and yet accepted as gentlemanly—had been over the ground and laid it out pleasantly, with a judicious eye for difficulties and well-selected dangers. A hundred yards from the starting-place, there was a fine opening in the shape of a low fence, and a good fall or "drop" behind it; further on, there was a quiet brook, which had often been fished for trout, but which the scientific eye of "J. Madden, Esq.," saw had wonderful capabilities, and, by a little divergence, could be included in the course. It was so timid and narrow that it offered only poor opportunity for accident; but it was arranged that half a dozen labourers should be set to work to widen it into a handsome and dangerous jump. Then the ground unhappily became smooth for a run of nearly three-quarters of a mile; but the well-trained eye of "Mr. J. Madden," marked down a suitable spot for an artificial jump; and

finally, after three miles and a half of sound labour, by a chance that seemed almost providential, a hard and satisfactory stone wall presented itself, which looked as if it had been fashioned of cold iron blocks and fragments. It was considered that this fatal obstacle could not have been found at a more opportune place, as making a sort of handsome finish to the whole, and being sure, as Mr. Madden put it, to "thin off" a good many of those who had successfully got round so far.

The day before, the usual unclean miscellany poured in. The field began to spread such a cloud of dirty dun-coloured sails that it seemed as if a fleet of shabby fishing-boats had somehow got in there and put out to sea. The gipsies, the players, the menagerie keepers, the roulette gentry, all camped there for the night. The right of putting up a "stand" had, on the advice of "J. Madden, Esq.," been farmed out to a speculator, and some of the speculator's men were busy hammering together some terribly raw and rude planks, which might have been an enlarged flower-stand, or a gigantic gallows for carrying out the extreme penalty of the law. So open was it, and so put together with such an economy of the material, that it did seem to present nothing but a succession of "drops." On the night before, a miscellany of another order had poured into the little town, and filled and distended it to bursting. Betting men came from distant quarters, who contrived to make even poor affairs such as this bring profit; for money can be won and lost on such "events," as drops of rain running down a pane of glass. The betting men were so shaven, so collarless, so tight about the limbs, so partial to imitating a pipe with a single straw, and so generally flavoured with the noble animal who was their profession, that it was hard to distinguish them from other professors of the noble animal on the green, who came with a tent or a "Monster Pavilion," and whose evening existence was ushered in by a gold fillet and web fleshings. A kind of inn, or "public," with rooms as low as the cabin of a ship, received temporary rank as an hotel, and charged a guinea for a corner of a room whose walls were sadly bent. It became like an hospital on a campaign.

The evening before, too, all the horses came, who seemed to be regarded with far more interest than the men who owned them, or the miscellany who were to bet on them, or the boys who were to ride them. As a train of them walked in procession through the place late at night, after the lamps had been lit, all closely swathed in their robes, and hooded and veiled, they seemed like brethren of a pious society who were about to inter a brother of their order. They were "coddled" almost like delicate children that had mammas to wrap them up against the night air. They had greaves on, like a Roman soldier, and some who had red edging to their clothing seemed to look out through red rings round their eyes, like

clowns in a pantomime. Their symmetry and smooth clean limbs were not then to be admired, for they were in great-coats like prize-fighters before the battle. But it was known that the square tall horse, that was a hand higher than the others, and stepped in a rude sturdy way, was indeed "King Brian," the famous Irish horse, who had raced here and raced there, had beaten at Chester and Liverpool, and was to beat at other great Games. Brent was his owner, and was to be his rider, and "Brent" was to arrive that night—but very late. No one cared particularly, since "Brent's horse" itself was present. Mr. Hanbury's horse, "the Baron," had only a local reputation, so that the shaven well-pumiced gentlemen who came from a distance did not make much account of him. He was, however, visited in a mysterious stable by mysterious admirers, for whom it was hoped he would win moneys, and who felt him, and stood in a half-circle about him. Mr. Hanbury was to ride the Baron in person. The precautions which are taken on greater occasions were carried out in a mimic way on the present occasion, and a groom waited on him in his stable all night, and was popularly supposed never to have closed his eyes.

Still there was a strange belief abroad that King Brian would not run after all. It was whispered, though no one knew who had whispered it, that "Brent," to whom "Brent's horse" belonged, would not appear himself, which was a matter of small moment: but it was currently believed that "Brent's horse" objected to any other rider, which was a matter of far more significance.

"J. Madden, Esq.," dined with the military gentlemen that night, and prepared a good deal of punch. The admiring crowd listened with delight to his rambling periods, which flowed from his mouth lubricated as it were with oil. Over the fumes of his favourite liquor his face grew into a rich lake colour. His legends of his craft were abundant. Craftily and confidentially ladling out his punch into a wine-glass, he "put them up to a thing or two." He mantled into a profuse and boundless good nature.

Hanbury and Captain Fernor were both there listening. Hanbury was delighted with this genial flow of counsel. The other thought him one of those "dreadful persons" so free of manners, whom it was a terrible trial for refined people to encounter. From sheer ignorance such break down all the elegant guards, the carte and tierce, of conversational fencers. Mr. Madden, still fluent in speech, his punch, his lubricating oil, his lake-coloured smiles, which spread away in great coarse waves over his face, was not unmindful of his politics. At intervals between his ladling, he was busy with his book. The children about, noisily made bets with him. "He'll be scratched. I'm fearful of it," he kept saying, with moaning. "I know Joe Brent. He's been at his old tricks again." (The old tricks were tricks that led

to the affliction called delirium tremens.) "If it's *that*," said Mr. Madden, lifting his wine-glass half way in the air, "there's as much chance as——" And he engulphed the remainder of the sentence with the liquor. But still, with all these doubts and misgivings, "J. Madden, Esq.," good naturedly "took" any offers that were laid against "Brent's horse," just, as he said, to keep the thing going.

Just at midnight a despatch was brought in and given to "J. Madden, Esq." He read it. "By Jove!" he said, striking the table, "was there ever anything—What did I tell ye? 'Tis from Cox," added he, looking at the envelope in a ruminative way. "Cox is Brent's friend."

"Well?" said all the boys and men together. "Well! Brent can't come. The old tricks, as I said. But Cox says, 'We must put some one on his back;' and, by the Lord, some one must be got," added Mr. Madden, rising in some excitement. "I tell ye, we must get some one."

"Ah! but that's just it!" said white-haired Young Brett. "Such a wild brute as that!"

"Not he," said J. Madden, Esq. "There's a way with him. I know it, and Brent's groom knows it. But is there a fellow among ye! By Jove! we must have some one. The horse *must* start."

Hanbury had been drinking some of the punch—from curiosity—in a sort of pottering fiddling way. He was a little excited—with talking, and talking loud above the others, and with, perhaps, some of the punch. Some days before, Fernor had said to himself, "I must keep this fellow at a distance," had taken out a new manner from his bag of properties and had fitted it on—one cold and formal, but polite to a nicety. This honest John Hanbury resented and fretted against.

"We are all of us booked," he said, "for something or other. We are all in to break our necks except——"

"Except Fernor there," said Thersites. "Hang it, man, why don't you side with somebody or something? You never seem to me to do anything! Why don't you take a side?"

"For many reasons," said Fernor, sipping claret, "too long to enter on here. I have no horse to ride, nor do I want to."

White-haired Young Brett laughed, a little foolishly. He, too, had relished that punch. "Hurt your leg, eh? Ha! ha!"

John Hanbury, who had a laugh always as it were on a hair-trigger, could not restrain another burst. Fernor's lip began to curl. J. Madden, Esq., struck in suddenly. "Beg pardon," he said; "I know what's in a man or a horse. No case of sore leg." Then, with great respect, "Seen you, Captain Fernor, I am sure, with the Crowther hounds."

"Yes!" said Fernor, a little astonished.

"Recollect the day Lord Tiptree broke his leg? You and three others in at the finish. How many miles was it—thirty-two?"

"Thirty-four," said Fernor, suddenly lifted

out of his ice-pail. "How well you recollect! Horse died of it, though."

"Ah!" said the other, "no case of hurt legs there. By the Lord, sir, you are the man for Brent's horse! I know your style as if I saw it yesterday. I saw you take the ditch and the heap of stones. Yours is the hand for him, sir. You'll sit him, sir, by——"

Mr. Madden had risen in his enthusiasm, and even pushed his tumbler into the middle of the table. The children's faces were all turned to Fernor. He sat with a calm but gratified smile, caught at the claret jug, and, with a gush, filled his glass leisurely. "I am very sorry," he said. "I can't—the time is so short—and——"

"Not a bit," said J. Madden, Esq.

"Pray allow me to finish," said Fernor, with great politeness; "and there are little matters about weight, dress, and the like. I am afraid it's out of the question."

John Hanbury laughed.

"I was afraid so all along," said Captain Thersites, insolently.

"But," said Fernor, slowly, and measuring him curiously, as though he were a preserved specimen in a jar, pushing back his chair and rising, "I'll not make difficulties."

"What? Then you'll ride?" said J. Madden, Esq., with something like a shout.

"I suppose so—I think so—well, yes," said Fernor, deliberately. It was quite an opening for true unflushed gentlemanly bearing. "Come to me at six to-morrow. We'll go out and look at the ground. Madden, get the colours altered. I have a jacket of my own somewhere—I always ride in mauve. Mind, six. Good night, Mr. Hanbury."

Thersites looked after him with amazement.

"He'll do," said Mr. Madden, in delight. "Do better than Brent, I can tell you. Was there ever such luck!"

Honest John Hanbury, however, kept looking steadfastly at the door by which Fernor had passed out, as if he could not quite understand. Perhaps it had begun to strike him that this was to be something more than a mere race between two strong horses.

CHAPTER VIII. THE RACE.

It was a bright and fresh day, and the sun coloured up the acres of faded hair trunks that spread over the race-ground, with such good effect that it really presented all the air of respectable and legitimate verdure. The crowd had poured out over those mangy downs; the whole fleet of sepia-coloured sails had spread itself on the horizon. The business and bustle was surprising. Some one had been sowing racing dragons' teeth, and they had come up a soiled, tarnished, noisy, glib miscellany—one that was at work ceaselessly with arms and hands, and a very hoarse voice, making ceaseless invitation. A miscellany that declaimed noisily over carts of stone ginger-beer bottles, that cowered

down over a three-legged stool, and conjured with a mysterious bridle and a skewer, that presided over pieces of coarse oil-cloth daubed with very raw colours and a very yellow Royal Crown, and a very rusted weather-cock that moved round languidly. A miscellany that did a vast business in nuts at little shooting-targets, whose range was only three feet long; a miscellany, in short, who danced and contorted in dirty fleshings, who picked pockets, who sold cards, lit cigars, sang mournful comic songs, wore decayed old scarlet hunting-coats, and swarmed generally, in and out, in irregular streams, through the cars and carriages.

The large nurseryman's flower-stand was black with human flower-pots. Below the flower-stand was the enclosure, where every one was as busy as in a market—where there was a sort of enlarged rabbit-hutch, and where there was something that looked like a mammoth slate hoisted at the top of a pole. The human flower-pots, growing animated at times, came down here to market, and wore little yellow tickets in their hats, and pushed backwards and forwards, and talked hoarsely and loudly, and all together, to stray men upon horse-back, who carried their hunting-whips on their knees at an acute angle, much as the bronze mounted Louises do their truncheons. Beyond this was a plantation of carriages, carts, and cabs, all horseless, and put closely together like a gigantic barricade; and here, in a little chartered phaeton, were the Manuel family, broken from their privacy, amused, delighted, and wondering exceedingly. That is, the two girls merely. But Mrs. Manuel had sat in a vast stone amphitheatre, and had seen the wild plungings of the bull, and the gored horses, and the sand steeped in clotted blood, and stayed at home. This gentler spectacle seemed a little tame after that.

With them was a new figure, about whom neighbouring carts and carriages began to speculate; but who was soon known to be a brother, a swarthy meditative brother, very young, and with rich black hair, so glossy that it looked as if it had been steeped in unguents. He was only twenty, but looked about him with a grave air of wisdom. In that little phaeton, however, reigned a certain flutter. There was to be battle and danger, which is the true basis of excitement, and a likely victory.

Some small skirmishing had been got through, worthless contests between say two inglorious steeds, mere foils for the greater struggle fixed for one o'clock. Hanbury had come up to them, his face all one great flush. "Only an hour off," he said. "You never saw anything like the Baron this morning—as bright and glossy as silk—you could see yourself in his coat. He will do, I think," he added. "I have not seen King Brian. But I am not afraid of him."

The sun flashed upon the face of the eldest Miss Manuel. "And that discreet Captain Fermor! I hope he is here to see you win."

"O!" said Hanbury, ever so little embar-

rassed, "I didn't tell you, though—you haven't heard—he is to ride King Brian."

"To ride King Brian!" said the two girls together, but in quite different keys.

"Why not?" said Hanbury, doubtfully. "And yet I'm sure I don't quite understand it. And he will do it well—at least, I suppose so," he added.

"But you told us," said Violet, "I think, that—that no one but his master could ride him."

"Exactly," said he. "And they say it is great pluck to try it. But it now turns out that he is a great horseman, or something of the kind. I don't understand it."

A harsh and conspicuous bell, which had grown up in the night, and rang every five minutes in a drunken disorderly way, now began again. "I must go," said Hanbury. "Saddling bell." If so, it had been about the twentieth saddling bell.

"Vanity," said Miss Manuel, looking at her sister. "More of that vanity! He is one mass of it. This is all to show us what an accomplished creature he is."

The younger girl cast down her eyes. "I am afraid," she said, "it will be a dreadful thing to see. Do you think there will be danger?"

"And poor Hanbury," said her sister, reproachfully. "You let him go without a word of comfort or encouragement. I saw him looking at you so. I should have given him one of those red geraniums, as they do in Spain. It would have comforted his heart and given him courage. He will want every stimulant for what he has to go through. See, he is looking this way. We must call him back. Ah!"

It was Fermor passing them quite close—in a great-coat like a dressing-gown—calm, tranquil, as if going to a ball. He bowed to them in most courtly fashion. Miss Manuel stamped on the bottom of the carriage with impatience. "He is coming to practise his skill on us," she thought. But with his pleasant smile he passed on.

Hanbury, a few yards away, had stopped doubtfully when he saw Fermor approaching; for he had all the wonderfully long sight of ardent and sensitive love. But when Fermor passed by so indifferently, his rude broad honest heart was struck. He thought of the other's calm courage, and skill, and training in society, and of his own natural bluntness, which had really reached to surliness; and one of his most genial smiles was spreading over his face. He was ashamed of his little petty jealousy. But as he was getting his hand ready to stretch out, he saw Fermor turn back, and go up to the carriage. The younger girl was detaching a flower from others which she had in her hand; she held also a large black fan. Some, therefore, had dropped on the seat. Hanbury, colouring and watching with fierce wariness, just saw Captain Fermor making a sweet speech, and putting a red flower in his button-hole. In reality he had helped himself, and was saying, "I must carry off one of these. Just going to ask you.

Pray for the mauve jacket!" And so he retreated, smiling. •

That was, however, the genuine saddling bell. For presently, out of some secret confine, bright gay-coloured figures, on horses as bright, began to defile among the human flower-pots in the enclosure. New modern centaurs, so light, so airy, and striped over with streaks—of yellows, and pinks, and all the gay colours—seeming actually varnished like the toy figures in Noah's arks. Presently the flower-stand began to fill again, and to grow black, and to rustle and flutter, and the miscellany inside the paling, with the white tickets in their hats, to crowd round each gaudy centaur with admiration. There was a buzz and a hum as John Hanbury, in pale blue silk, came along on his great horse. Such a mammoth steed, mahogany coloured, high, square, with a chest like a Torso, with a fierce eye, and his mouth strapped down to his waist. But so bright, and oiled, and curled, he looked as if he had stepped out of a boudoir. As he passed, his wake was marked by a glitter of little white note-books, and a fresh flutter of leaves. Approving eyes settled on him. When he got upon the open ground he swooped away into a full bold stride, as even as a pendulum. Men with broad brims awry over their brows worked away knowingly with pencils.

There was a little procession of the others—some small, some large, some long, some shy, and some wild; and each with a gay parti-coloured puppet on his back. Presently there was another hum. "Brent's horse!"

A delicate Persian silk mauve jacket, grateful to the eye, and Fermor looking as light and small as a boy. But his horse—an iron grey, close knit, with a heavy secret strength in quarters, but a quiet unobtrusive beast, as if walking out to water. Great admiration among the sloped hats at this power in posse. The sunlight glinted down, and brought out the rich tint of the rider's dress: the Manuels caught it some hundred yards away, and the second whispered to her sister, with something like a shy whisper of delight, "There is Captain Fermor."

"How calmly he takes it," said the other sister, scornfully. "All assumed. All acting!"

Mr. Madden, with a flag in his hand, is beside Fermor. "Steady is the word," he whispered. "Recollect, he will run away with you at the last mile—and let him."

Bell again! Start in some undiscovered corner. All the figures on the great flower-pot stand were swaying uneasily—steward in red coat cracking his whip excitedly to clear away last few stragglers. A roar and half-leap among the flower-pots. Thirteen little wooden figures out of a Noah's ark, a mile away, have been seen to start, and are spreading out like a fan.

There is a gentle rustle and agitation on the black flower-pot stand, and every second hand holds a glass—but a thousand faces are all turned one way. A few Lilliputian horses may be seen far off, travelling very slow, and strag-

gling, and have gone over a very tiny jump, as might be over a bit of card. But now the flower-pot stand begins to be agitated: there is a crescendo hum swelling up into a roar, as from a thousand shells held to a thousand ears. Flower-pot stand is giving spasmodic shouts, hoarsely. "Blue, by —" "No!—red—blue—red—yellow—blue again!—by — he's down! —no, up—they're all over!"

They were, in fact, at the stone wall—what Mr. Madden had called the "beautiful stone wall"—and were growing into sight, coming on nearer, magnifying steadily. Great agitation and flutter in the phaetons, for they knew not what was doing. But here was the stone wall. Up, down! up, down! one after the other! Blue leading, coming into sight with a flash, going over soft as velvet. Then a flash of red, then of yellow, then a roar of dismay from the stand, for two are down together. Roar! reverberation of shells growing louder, arms tossing, and a sound of hollow thudding on the ground, as if giants were having their carpets beat. Every head turning with a flash, making an inclined plane of faces, every neck straining, every foot stamping, every hand clapping, and the train came thundering by, blue leading, then a streaked yellow, black, and that mauve jacket, fifth or sixth, at a calm gallop, his stretches keeping time musically. This was but the first time round, and they have swooped away round the corner, and are gone.

They have been thinned down to some seven or so. A riderless horse, very wild, and with his own stirrups scourging his flanks, is going on with the rest. Blue comes to the fence, and is seen to look behind. Pink over the first. He has it. No. Yes. Blue next. "That's the man!" Then Mauve. "Yes," Mr. Madden shouts, "let him go!" But he *has* gone. They are coming with a rush, and Mauve, calm as in a drawing-room, has shot ahead. The great gaunt horse is in distress, and blue is using his whip. Flower-stand is one disordered roar of "Blue wins! Mauve has it—no—yes—no—yes!" And here is now the terrible wall at which they are rushing, as if they wanted to crush through it.

There are wise people who affect to know the great horse. He will go at a rush on the smooth ground. Here is the wall. Now! Crash! As they rise in the air, there is a dust of fallen stones; and Blue, darting out of the cloud like thunder, comes pounding in, the ground shaking, arms working "lifting" his horse. Pink second, half a dozen lengths behind; and Mauve—

Where was Mauve? Shouts of joy, victory, execrations, confusion, and a great rush down to the fatal wall. A mob was already gathered before this one reached the wall. "Stand back!" Some who pushed well to the front got a good view, and helped to drag a shattered rider from under a shattered horse. "Killed—he must be killed!" No one can speak as to this for a few moments, until a surgeon, who is hurrying up, shall pronounce. "Brent's horse" is lying helpless on his side, with his great round eye glazing fast,

and his poor smashed flanks heaving faintly. But Mauve, the bright jacket torn, soiled, smeared, lies stiff and stark on a bank as if he were dead.

The doctor is presently feeling him all over. Must be bled at once. Other doctors, looking after the horse, pronounce it is all over with him, and that he must be shot on the spot.

Others not so near, talked of it, straining their necks to get a view. "I saw it, by Jove! He rode over on him, as sure as I am standing here. I was as close as I am to you." Excited men from the top shelf of the flower-stand, with extra strong glasses, and opera-glass cases slung about them like canteens, came panting up. "He 'cannoned' him, didn't he? I'm sure he did! Who was close—who saw? He was winning, I'll swear!" But no one was so frantic as Mr. Madden. For the better enjoyment of what he had an instinct would take place at this stage, he had posted himself close to the stone wall, but in secure shelter. He was tossing his arms. "I saw it all; the 'King' was coming beautifully to it." He was furious and savage, and threatened frightful penalties.

From the Manuel carriage had been seen an indistinct ruin of men and horses crumbling down together. The second girl had the opera-glass, the others were all excited and in a flurry with Hanbury's victory. "I knew he would win," said Miss Manuel; "did I not tell you?" But she noticed the restless way her sister was looking towards the stone wall.

"Pauline, some one is hurt. I am sure of it. Do you see the crowd? I am afraid that some one is killed. O! Louis! Louis! run and see what has happened."

Pauline turned suddenly and looked at her sharply; the other dropped her eyes.

The brother went to fetch news. Just as he got up, a doctor was saying something about concussion, and giving directions for removal, with quiet, &c. "Stand back" he had to say every instant; and a thoughtful crowd, pressing on him all the time, called out to others, "Stand back!"

The brother came back, but Mr. Hanbury did not. "Well?" the two sisters said together.

"He is hurt," said he, "and very seriously, I think."

Even the eldest Miss Manuel showed some eagerness, some agitation.

"Hurt? No, it can't be. Go on. Tell us about it," she said.

But the second girl, a little flushed, was gathering up her black lace shawl about her in a restless fashion.

"He is quite insensible," he went on, "and no one seems to be able to say whether he is alive or dead. I didn't see a doctor there, and they don't appear to know what to do."

The younger girl had her hands clasped, and gave a cry. "O! let us go," she said. "Don't let us leave him to those rough people."

"Go! No! no! What could we do?" said

her sister, irresolutely. She was thinking how cold, how unjust she had been to this poor steeple-chaser.

"Don't let us lose time," said the other, opening the door herself and springing out. "He has no friends here—we might lend our carriage—we might be useful. Come!" and, with a flush on her cheek, and a decision in her speech quite unusual, she took hold of her brother's arm, and they walked towards the group.

There was a sort of sporting doctor there, who was busy with exploring and appraisings. In the centre lay out with closed eyes, with a face as white, and dull, and close in texture as marble, the luckless Mauve rider. His wrist, which the doctor had been feeling, when let go, dropped upon the Mauve chest with a heavy inert sound. The brother felt his sister's arm tremble in his.

"If there were any house quite close, *quite* close," said the doctor (whose sleeves were turned over as if he were about to begin an operation at once), "or if a roomy open phaeton could be got that we could lay him in at length——" and he looked round.

A very crisp neat-looking gentleman, seeming as if he were a clean cast from a mould—whose grey whiskers, if one took the liberty of touching them, would crackle as if made of wire—came up to the doctor, and said: "Just the very thing! our carriage—not twenty yards off. Only too happy; shall have it brought up at once. Beg your pardon, excuse me." This he said with extraordinary courtesy to a poor racing Fool in a battered cap and tarnished scarlet hunting-coat, and who, utterly bewildered by the civility, allowed him to pass.

"Very good," said the doctor, again looking round. "But the barracks are out of the question—two miles away, and a broiling day like this."

John Hanbury, with hands clasped, and a face of the most abject despair and horror, was standing beside the Manuels, quite stupefied. He had hardly noticed them.

"Has he no friends close by?" said the doctor, "just to take him in for a few hours—some one in those houses there, eh?" and he nodded at an incomplete terrace close by.

John Hanbury woke up. "To be sure," he said, hurriedly; "the very thing! Won't you?" he said to the younger girl. "Of course you will."

She understood this ellipse at once. "Yes, yes!" she said to him; "let him come!"

"Come! Where?" said her sister.

"To our house. Yes, he must," said the younger girl, excitedly; "it is only humanity!"

Her sister was overpowered by her eagerness.

"But——" she began.

"Thanks, thanks," said Hanbury; "here is the carriage." And the fresh crisp gentleman was pushing through the crowd. "Now, please."

"Gently, gently," said the doctor; and Fernor was raised softly, and carried as softly to a little open phaeton.

"My house is so far away, on the hill there, that really I should be delighted," said the crisp

gentleman, shutting the door on the doctor, "only——"

"Or the barracks. Which?"

"No, no," said the other, "we have got a place close by. What number did you say?"

"4, Raglan-terrace," said Hanbury.

"Now go at a walk," said the doctor, "and be steady."

The bell was ringing out harshly for saddling, little patches of bright colour were seen far off up at the stand—circulating. There was to be another race. The crowd had seen the best part of this show, and might be late for the other. A good many, however, remained beside this critical jump, as it was very likely there would be more falls and more accidents.

THE LAND OF MONTEZUMA.

EXTINCT races of animals are among the most interesting of the naturalist's studies. He delights to fancy the mammoth masticating the gigantic vegetables which now form our coal. He pictures to himself flying lizards big enough and fierce enough to snatch a babe out of its mother's arms. He resuscitates and endows with life and action every fossil bone, every broken tooth, every scale and shell. An ancient footprint on indurated sand suffices to figure to his mind's eye the bloated batrachian that made it. He revels in the beauties of a bygone fauna. A menagerie, which no longer exists, still affords him endless amusement.

There has been great talk of late about fossil man; about the age of stone, before mingled metals had brought forth bronze, and while iron yet was ore. And, in truth, extinct societies of men are at least as interesting as extinct races of birds and beasts. A broken potsherd even, a flint arrow-head, a stake deeply driven into mud, may tell a tale of wonder, a drama, a tragedy. The "Peruvian Letters" are a fascinating proof how readily the human heart yields to human sympathy, even when the objects of it are beings who have passed away like the shadow of a cloud; and now M. Chevalier conjures up a panorama* of what once existed in the distant land whither Maximilian of Austria and his Empress Charlotte have transferred their fortunes for weal or woe.

Mexico, before the Spanish conquest, is a brilliant dream reduced to reality. And this work of ages was swept away by six hundred men with Cortes at their head. For they laid violent hands, not on a savage populace, but on a state elaborately organised. The Aztecs, the dominant race amongst the Mexicans, had made extensive conquests. Their supremacy was acknowledged as far as Guatemala. The name of their emperor, Montezuma (the European version of Moctheuzoma), inspired great respect and

still greater terror. Soon after disembarking, Cortes, at an interview with Teuhllile, the governor of the province, told him that he was the envoy of an emperor quite as powerful as Montezuma. Teuhllile was stupefied to learn that the world contained another sovereign as mighty as his own. Some weeks afterwards, Cortes asked a cacique of what monarch he was the vassal. "Whose vassal can I be," the chief replied, "unless Montezuma's?" Some months later, after advancing into the interior, he inquired of another chief whether Montezuma were not his sovereign. The reply was, "Of whom is Montezuma not the sovereign?"

This prince was surrounded by the extreme of luxury. The lowest offices about his person were filled by men of high rank. Etiquette required that he should be addressed with downcast eyes. Cortes wrote from Mexico to Charles the Fifth, "I believe that there is no known sultan or unbelieving prince" (according to his ideas, the ne plus ultra of splendour) "who is served with such pomp and magnificence." Montezuma's own words at his first reception of Cortes show with what awe and admiration he was regarded by the indigenous population. "Your friends at Tlascala," he said, with a smile, "have probably told you that I resembled the gods; that I dwelt in palaces built of gold, silver, and precious stones; but you see those accounts are without foundation. My palaces, like the dwellings of other men, are made of wood and stone. My body," he added, uncovering his arm, "is of flesh and blood, like yours. Certainly, my ancestors have left me an immense empire; my territory is vast; I possess gold and silver; but——"

The first element of wealth, the population, was abundant in ancient Mexico. The received opinion was that Montezuma counted thirty vassals, each able to arm a hundred thousand men. But Montezuma's three million soldiers are probably an occidental hyperbole resembling those permitted in the East. Still, everything tends to prove that the country was once more populous than it is at present. Now, a numerous population is a sure sign of a certain advancement in civilisation. Where many human beings are crowded on the same spot, there must be industrial arts to feed, clothe, and lodge them, besides regular laws and precautionary measures to maintain the peace and order of society.

Agriculture flourished in the Aztec empire. The soil of Mexico lends itself to the growth of the most varied vegetable productions. Under the torrid zone, within a limited space, it presents a succession of every sort of climate, from the burning plains which skirt the ocean, to the majestic peaks where you find the flora of Iceland and Hudson's Bay. The ancient Mexicans had a great number of crops to supply their wants. Maize and bananas were their staple diet. The cacao furnished them with a beverage which Europe has adopted under its original Aztec name, chocolate. They had neither

* *Le Mexique, Ancien et Moderne*, par Michel Chevalier. A translation, which we have not seen, has been published by Maxwell and Co.

coffee nor the sugar-cane, but they obtained sugar from the stems of maize. Of their medicinal plants we have a powerful sample in the one which comes from the town of Jalapa. Their forests supplied them with vanilla, of which Mexico long held the monopoly. On their cactuses they reared their cochineal insect, which is still an important article of commerce. With an abundance of cotton at hand, they did not want for clothing. The greatest novelty for the Spaniards, which they had to show, was tobacco, which they called *yetl*. They both smoked and snuffed it; but this indulgence, it seems, was confined to the rich.

One of their most curious crops was the aloe, or rather agave, known amongst them by the name of *maguicy*, and which supplied them with pulque, a fermented drink of which they were very fond. The aloes, planted in rows ten feet apart, grew with little or no care, for ten or a dozen years. But as soon as the flowering stem began to shoot, it was cut out, so as to leave a sort of tup, in which the sap of the plant was collected, and taken daily, or several times a day. Fermentation speedily followed. The resulting beverage had one peculiarity which unfitted it for European palates: it was rare that it had not a slight aroma of rotten eggs, arising, perhaps, from the uncleanly way in which it was prepared, and the skins in which it was sent to market. The agave furnished, and furnishes still, a valuable fibre for cordage, sailcloth, and other uses to which hemp is applied. The points of the leaves served as needles and awls. With the leaves entire, houses were thatched. The root was eaten.

If Mexican agriculture had great available wealth within its reach, far surpassing the resources which Europe had to offer to its first inhabitants, its poverty in live stock was extreme. It possessed not a single beast of burden; not a horse, an ox, an ass, or a camel. The ancient Mexicans had not even the alpaca, which affords the Peruvians a feeble means of transport. The sheep and the goat were equally unknown.

Now, the muscular force of the larger animals is one of the most efficient aids to human progress. Where beasts of burden do not exist, man is obliged to take their place. Hence, for a portion of a population, the necessity of servile employment. All kind of transport, therefore, in the Aztec empire, was performed on the backs of men. The chiefs went in litters on the shoulders of their "*tamanes*," or porters. Of course the tillage of the fields was done by hand. This is still the case in China, where, beyond the valleys of the great rivers, or far from the canals, transport on human backs is customary, and the soil is principally cultivated by human arms. The conquest relieved the Mexicans of these degrading tasks. Man is no longer a beast of burden. Mules for commerce on a large scale, asses for the supply of towns, and horses for travellers, have become his substitutes. Only in the mountain districts are heavy loads, wood for

instance, of from sixty to eighty pounds, carried on the backs of men.

The animal food which they were unable to obtain from flocks and herds was furnished by the chase and by a few animals which they had domesticated. Like the Chinese, they ate a variety of dog, called *techichi*. But their principal resource for meat was the turkey, called *totolin*, which they reared in enormous quantities. Turkeys were a drug, sufficiently abundant to cause a national surfeit. Cortes relates that the poultry-yards of Montezuma's palace were stocked with several thousand turkeys; and Bernal Diaz tells how, every day, a couple of hundred were sacrificed to feed the beasts in the emperor's menagerie; proving first, that the said menagerie was vast, and secondly, that turkeys were not very dear. It was from Mexico that turkeys were brought to Europe.

For the transmission of news and orders, Montezuma organised relays of men capable of a speed approaching that of the mails of our olden time before the dawn of the railway period. Through the agency of these swift couriers, his table was served with fish which had been swimming the day before, in the Gulf of Mexico, or along the shores of Acapulco. For the same pleasant purpose Maximilian will avail himself of four-footed carriers and the carriage-road which runs from Vera Cruz to the capital.

The Mexicans were passionate lovers of flowers. They fully appreciated the vegetable treasures which nature had profusely lavished upon them. In their splendid gardens they assembled those which were most remarkable for their perfume or their brilliant colours. With these they associated medicinal plants methodically arranged, the shrubs most remarkable for their flowers or foliage, or for the excellence of their fruits or seeds, together with trees of majestic or elegant aspect. They were particularly fond of sprinkling their parterres and clumps on the steep slopes of hills, where they seemed suspended. If they rivalled Semiramis's hanging gardens, they may be reckoned among the wonders of the world.

Aqueducts brought water from afar, which fell in cascades or spread in basins peopled with curious and gaudy fish. Mysterious pavilions were hidden beneath the leaves; statues arose in the midst of flowers. Exactly as we collect the rarest animals to adorn our gardens devoted to science, so the Mexicans compelled the animal kingdom to pay its tribute of ornament to their pleasure-grounds. Before the Jardin des Plantes and the Zoological Gardens were, the Mexican Horticultural Menagerie was. There, were bright-feathered birds, in aviaries as big as houses; wild animals, carnivorous beasts, and even serpents. There, Bernal Diaz first saw the rattlesnake, which he describes as "having castanets in its tail." At that date, Europe possessed no Jardin des Plantes or Zoological Garden. That of Padua, said to be the first, was founded in 1445; Venice, however, claims to

have had one earlier. The others followed at a respectful distance of time.

At Tezcozincó (five miles from Tezcuco), King Nezahualcoyotl had a garden hanging on the side of a hill, which was reached by a flight of five hundred steps, and which was surmounted by a reservoir, from which the water descended into three successive basins, each decorated with colossal statues. A simple cacique, at Huaxtepec, had gardens five miles in circumference—a park, in short. The humblest individuals shared the taste of the great for flowers. When Cortes, shortly after landing, entered the town of Cempoalla, the natives came to meet him, both men and women mingling with the ranks of his soldiers, and bringing bouquets and garlands of flowers, which they hung round the neck of Cortes's horse, while others adorned his helmet with chaplets of roses.

Singular were the chinampas, or floating gardens, which swarmed in numbers on the lakes. Doubtless, the idea was taken from verdant tufts that had fallen into the water, or from rafts of wood on which grass had grown. These artificial islands, from fifty to a hundred yards in length, served for the culture of vegetables and flowers to supply the markets of the capital.

The arts and trades of ancient Mexico produced not only what was necessary for the requirements of life, but even articles of luxury. They were skilful weavers of cotton and aloe thread. With cotton they made a sort of cuirass (cacaupil), impenetrable by arrows. They were acquainted with a great many mineral and vegetable dyes, besides employing cochineal. They baked pottery for domestic uses, and made, like the modern Russians, numerous utensils of varnished wood. They had no iron, but supplied its place, for tools, with bronze, which, by tempering, acquires considerable hardness. Bronze, however, could not have been very common, because, for the same purposes, they employed a vitreous mineral harder than glass—obsidian, which they called *iztli*, found in volcanic formations. They cut this natural glass into plates with an edge, and employed it for knives, razors (although less bearded than we are, they still had barbers), arrow-heads, and spear-heads. From their mines, which they roughly worked, they extracted lead, tin, silver, gold, and copper. They excelled in working the precious metals. The ornaments and vessels of gold and silver which Cortes received from Montezuma before ascending to the table-land, as well as those which he found at Mexico, were cast, soldered, chased with the graver, enriched with gems, and enamelled with a skill at least equal to that of European goldsmiths. "No prince in the known world," Cortes wrote to Charles the Fifth, "possesses jewellery equivalent to his in value." And he clearly gives you to understand that the workmanship was in no way inferior to the materials.

Another art which the Aztecs practised with great success, was the manufacture of feather tapestry. The country, like most others

beneath the tropics, abounds with birds of brilliant plumage. These feathers, artistically woven by means of a cotton warp, and sometimes intermingled with the fur of animals, formed tissues of the richest and most varied colours, of elegant and correct design, which were worn by the rich, or which served for ornamental hangings in the palaces and temples. This manufacture employed a great many hands, and its produce made a sensation in Europe.

A Mexican chief, when he went to battle, wore a mantle of feathers over his golden cuirass. His helmet, sometimes of wood and leather, sometimes of silver, represented the menacing head of the animal which was his family emblem, and bore a plume of feathers of his family colours. His arms were adorned with bracelets, and a necklace of jewels hung over his breast. Many carried a carved buckler, which was surrounded by a fringe of feathers. Their weapons were, the arrow, the sling, the javelin, the spear, and the *maquahuitl*: a sort of two-handed sword, about a yard long, with a double edge made of plates of obsidian fixed in a bar of wood. The points of their spears and arrows were often of copper.

The Aztec architecture was monumental. They possessed several kinds of stone of volcanic origin, which were at the same time light and durable. For statuary, which they practised much without producing anything better than hideous idols, resembling those of India and China, they had black porphyry and speckled granites. Their palaces were spacious, but almost all of one story only, and composed of separate buildings scattered over a vast enclosure, according to the Chinese plan. Their apartments were ceiled with odoriferous woods skilfully carved. The outside walls were coated with a hard white stucco, which caused them to shine in the sun. At the first Mexican town (Cempoalla) which the Spaniards saw, the horsemen of the vanguard, deceived by this brilliant whiteness, and also, perhaps, by their own imagination, galloped back to inform their comrades that the houses were encased in plates of silver. This mistake probably suggested Southey's

Queen of the valley, thou art beautiful;
Thy walls, like silver, sparkle in the sun.

Their temples were tall pyramids of bricks baked in the sun, or of earth merely, but faced with stone, surmounted by sanctuaries and towers ornamented with images of their gods. On the summit there were constantly blazing fires, which, during the darkness of the long tropical nights, gave to those edifices a mysterious aspect. The immensity of the temples and palaces, the enormous labour required for the constructions of all kinds which crowded the valley of Mexico, including the piers of masonry jutting into the lake, drew cries of admiration from the "conquistadores." As to the city of Mexico itself, when Guatimozin's obstinate defence compelled Cortes to demolish its house

by house, he wrote to Charles the Fifth that it grieved him to do so, "because it was the most beautiful thing in the world."

Mechanics were still in their infancy; nevertheless, the Mexicans contrived to move large masses, although less enormous, in truth, than those of the ancient Egyptians. Such, for instance, was the zodiacal stone, now imbedded in the walls of the cathedral of Mexico, and estimated by Mr. Prescott to weigh more than a hundred thousand pounds, which they had brought by land from a distance of several leagues.

Their monetary system was based on two metals: gold and tin. Hollow quills were filled with gold dust: a rough method of measuring the quantity. The tin was melted in the form of a T, which allowed them to have pieces tolerably equal in size. Grains of cacao served them for "coppers:" a usage which continued long after the conquest, and has, perhaps, not even yet entirely ceased.

Their numeration rested on the number twenty, which was represented by a flag. The base of their arithmetic was therefore divisible not only by five (a favourite number with all nations, doubtless on account of the fingers of the hand), but also by four, which necessarily implies division by two. The weak side of our decimal system lies in the impossibility of dividing its base, ten, by four. The Aztec signs represented what are called in arithmetic the successive "powers" of 20, that is 20 times 20, or 400, indicated by a feather, and 20 times 400, figured by a purse. It is as if we had special figures for the numbers 10, 10 times 10, or 100, and 10 times 100, or 1000. From one to twenty the numbers were represented by grouping together as many dots as there were unities. This arithmetic writing is very inferior to that which we have received from India through the Arabs, and which is founded on the ingenious idea of value being made to depend on position, namely, that every place to the left multiplies the value of a figure by ten; but it is quite as good as that of the Greeks and Romans. The signs of 20, 400, and 1000, could be reduced to fractions of halves and quarters, in order to represent, without much complication, a greater diversity of numbers. Thus 200 was figured by the half of a feather; 6000 by three-quarters of a purse.

The Mexicans had two kinds of writing. Not only did they employ hieroglyphic characters, both figurative and symbolical, but they had also, like the ancient Egyptians, phonetic signs, representing, not a thing, nor an action, nor an idea, but a sound. From this to an alphabet, there is only one step; or rather it is an alphabet ready made. Nevertheless, like other people who have neglected to carry out and turn to advantage a grand discovery, they almost always confined themselves to the use of figurative and symbolic characters. Consequently, their written documents required some assistance from memory for their interpretation.

Their books, composed of leaves like ours, and

not of rolls like those of ancient Greece, were collected in libraries. Unfortunately, nearly all of them were burnt, at the instance of the first Archbishop of Mexico. In his zeal for the destruction of every remnant of paganism, he endeavoured to annihilate the Aztec literature. He got together all the manuscripts he could lay hands upon, and publicly burnt them in the grand square of Mexico. Contemporary writers state that there was a mountain of them; and the sad example was generally followed, as a proof of devotion to the new religion.

Their criminal law was of extreme severity; death was the penalty of almost every offence; death for murder, adultery, and certain specified thefts; death for the owner who removed his landmark; death even for the son who gave himself up to drunkenness and dissipated his patrimony. Nor are these the only instances in which their civilisation was stained with blood. There were human sacrifices of prisoners taken in war, with circumstances of horrible refinement in cruelty.

Their morals were not dissolute. Marriage was surrounded with protective forms, and was celebrated with solemnity. The social position of their women resembled more what we see in Europe than what is customary in Asia. They were not shut up in harems, like the Mahomedan women, nor were their feet mutilated as in China. They went about with their faces uncovered, were admitted to festivals, and took their seats at banquets. In the nineteenth century, there are still parts of France where, among the peasantry, the women take no share in a feast except to humbly serve the lords of the creation. The Mexican women were as exempt as possible from violent labour. The men reserved such tasks for themselves, with a delicacy which might be imitated by Western Europe, and which, among civilised nations, the English and the Anglo-Saxon population of the New World alone observe. Ancient Mexico certainly had not reached the same point as modern England; but still the principle existed. There are few signs which more surely indicate the degree to which civilisation has advanced. Among savages, woman is a beast of burden; there is scarcely in the world a more wretched condition than that of the squaws of the American Indians. In the Pyrenees, you see women climbing the steepest slopes with a load of manure upon their shoulders, or descending from the highest table-lands with a burden of hay or corn. The strangers who visit those charming valleys for the sake of their pure air and their healing waters, must return with a lowered opinion of the pretensions of the French to be the most civilised nation on earth.

The Aztecs had their Code of Politeness, their rules of good behaviour, both for boys and girls.

"Revere, love, and serve your father and mother; obey them; for the son who acts otherwise, will repent of it.

"Take care, my son, never to make game of aged, sickly, or deformed persons; nor of sinners. Do not treat them haughtily; do not hate them; but humble yourself before the Lord, fearing to fall into like misfortunes.

"Do not poison anybody; for you would offend the Deity through his creature, your crime would be discovered, you would have to bear the punishment, and die by the same death.

"Do not meddle with matters where you are not asked to do so, lest you give offence and be charged with indiscretion.

"Be modest in your speech. Do not interrupt people who are speaking. If they express themselves ill, if they state what is incorrect, content yourself with avoiding those faults. Keep silence when it is not your turn to speak; and if you are asked a question, give a frank reply, without passion and without falsehood. Be careful of others' interests, and your conversation will be listened to with respect and attention. If, my son, you refrain from tale-bearing and from repeating jokes, you will avoid the fault of spreading untruths and sowing discord, which is a cause of confusion for him who commits it.

"Be not a loiterer in the streets. Waste not your time in the markets or the baths, for fear the evil one should tempt you and make you his victim. Neither be affected nor over-nice in your dress; for it is a mark of little judgment.

"Keep secret what you hear said. Let it be learned through others rather than through you. If you cannot help mentioning it, speak openly without concealing anything, even if you thought you would be right in doing so. Do not relate what you have witnessed. Be prudent, for prating is an ugly vice, and if you lie you will certainly be punished. Be silent; nothing is gained by talking.

"When you are spoken to, do not move either your hands or your feet, nor look on one side to the right or the left. Avoid rising if you are seated, or sitting down if you are standing; you would be considered giddy and unpolite."

Amongst the maxims for ladies are:

"If your parents choose you a husband, you are bound to love, listen to, and to obey him; to do with pleasure what he tells you; not to turn away your head when he speaks to you; and if he says anything which annoys you, try to master your vexation. If he lives on your property, do not despise him on that account. Be neither morose nor uncivil, for you would offend the Deity, and your husband would be angry with you. Tell him gently whatever you think proper to say to him. Do not make offensive remarks to him before others, nor even alone, for the shame and disgrace will fall upon yourself. If any one pays a visit to your husband, receive him well and show him friendly attentions."

These maxims of the ancient Mexicans are not masterpieces of literary skill; but they do not

contain a word which Christian parents of the nineteenth century might not teach their children: while the matter required to complete the code would, in substance, not be much.

QUEEN GUENNIVAR'S ROUND.

NAIAD, for Grecian waters!
Nymph for the fountain-side:
But old Cornwall's bounding daughters
For grey Dundagel's tide!

The wild wind proudly gathers
Round the ladies of the land,
And the blue wave of their fathers
Is joyful where they stand.

Naiad, for Grecian waters!
Nymph for the fountain-side:
But old Cornwall's bounding daughters
For grey Dundagel's tide!

Yes! when memory rejoices
In her long-beloved theme:
Fair forms, and thrilling voices,
Will mingle with my dream.

Naiad, for Grecian waters!
Nymph for the fountain-side:
But old Cornwall's bounding daughters
For grey Dundagel's tide!

QUITE ALONE.

THE continuation of this Serial Story is unavoidably postponed until this day fortnight.

B E E S.

It is not by casually looking into several beehives, or even by carefully watching one, that an observer can be justified in contradicting general conclusions. Bees, according to some observers, modify their conduct according to circumstances. This is a far more surprising fact—if it be a fact—than that they should be guided by an unvarying instinct.

There are three classes of bees in a hive: the queen bee, the drones or males, and the workers, which are of neither gender, with a few occasional exceptions, arising from causes which will be mentioned presently. The queen bee may be readily distinguished from the other members of the hive by her size, she being about twice as large as the commoners. Without venturing to say positively that this depends solely on the size of the cell in which the egg is deposited, and to the larva issuing from it being fed on a different kind of food, it is almost certain that this is the case. The royal cells are placed in a different position to the other cells, are considerably larger, and built near the centre of the hive. The worms-hatched from these eggs are attended by the other bees with especial care, are more abundantly fed, and with a food which is said to be better in quality from that supplied to the

other larvæ. When the time arrives for them to spin their cocoons, the entrance to the cells is closed with peculiar care. The transformation having been completed, the royal occupant proceeds to cut her way out, an operation she is not long in completing. Supposing, as does occasionally happen, that two queens issue from their respective cells at the same time, their first act, as soon as they have had a little breathing-time, is to attack each other. The war is to the knife. There is no compromise, no surrender; the least fortunate, or the weaker, invariably receives her death-wound. During this contest the workers assemble round them, and, while observing a rigid impartiality between the combatants, effectually prevent either of them from escaping from the ring until one has achieved the victory, whom they forthwith accept as their future sovereign. On no account will they tolerate the presence of more than one queen in a hive at the same time. A close observer says that the queen selects her husband from among the drones, and flies away with him to spend their brief honeymoon among the flowers. This is a pretty assumption, but hardly capable of proof; it is more probable that polyandry is practised among bees on a very extensive scale. At the end of the summer, when the functions of the drones, whatever they may be, are at an end, they either receive an intimation to quit the hive, or some instinct tells them that mischief is brewing against them, for they assemble in groups and await their fate with the numbness of despair, or from a vague feeling that they can offer something like an effectual resistance if they are associated in a body; probably the latter is the case; for, otherwise there is nothing to prevent them from abandoning the hive. As they have no stings,* of course they have not the shadow of a chance when the contest begins, and they therefore fall easy victims to the workers, though they do sometimes offer a determined resistance; preferring apparently to die in defence of their right to a domicile, to becoming homeless vagabonds, whose inevitable fate is to perish of cold or hunger. After all, however, their case is not so bad as it appears; they have fared like Dives all the summer at the expense of the community, and it can hardly be considered unjust that, at the approach of winter when no more food can be collected, they should be ordered to quit the society, and not be allowed any longer to partake of food which they have had no share in collecting. In this respect the practice of bees resembles that of certain savage tribes, who, in famine-time, intimate to their aged parents that, on a specified day, their sufferings will be terminated, and, in accordance with this intimation, bury them.

The working bees are smaller than the queen bee or the drones. Upon them devolves all the labour of keeping the hive clean, of collecting the food for the royal table and the drones, and of making a provision for the season when flowers

cease to bloom. Apart from the distinctions of sex, size, and the absence of a sting in the drones, the bodily formation is apparently alike in all the classes; there is a powerful eye on either side of the head, and three lesser ones on the top. To communicate with each other, and to enable them to build their cells with mathematical precision, they are endowed with antennæ. With the aid of these they work with as much precision in what appears to us absolute darkness (but which to them, with their numerous eyes, may be light for aught we know), as they could in a glass house. When a community has multiplied to such an extent that the hive is no longer capacious enough for the accommodation of all, the queen quits it for a new home, followed by a large proportion of her subjects. The bee-keeper knows some hours before the event, that it is in contemplation. There is a great humming in the hive; the only way of accounting for which is by supposing that the intending emigrants are bidding those they leave behind good-by. They have, however, an exceedingly keen appreciation of the comfort of a home in wet weather, and, if rain begins to fall at the last moment when they are on the very point of starting, they will never think of coming out under such circumstances. It is at such a time as this that the destructive propensity of the queen is manifested. As the moment when her successor will make her appearance approaches, she becomes greatly agitated, and, if she were not prevented by the workers, would tear open the royal cells, and put the occupants to death. When the swarm emerges from the hive, it is a common practice in Wiltshire (and possibly in other counties) for the owner or some member of the family to take the door key and a frying-pan, and beat the latter with the key, with the view of preventing the bees from flying to a distance. In a few minutes the queen selects the spot on which she alights, and the other bees follow her example. It is a curious sight to see this dark bunch of bees clustered together on a slender branch, weighing it down beneath its living load. It is customary, in some parts of the country, to guard against stings, by fastening a veil over the face, and covering the hands with a pair of leather or kid gloves. The sting of a single bee is not of much consequence; it smartens severely at first, but an efficacious remedy is always at hand, in the shape of the "blue" which laundresses use, common soap scraped and spread on a bit of rag, or a little tobacco well moistened with saliva; all old and well-known cures. It might be as well to bear this last remedy in mind at this particular season when fruit is so abundant; for cases have occurred where persons have been stung in the mouth or throat from inadvertently swallowing a bee or wasp which had buried itself in the fruit; and a quid of tobacco is easily obtained. The hive is held beneath the swarm, and they are either shaken or brushed into it.

The first proceeding of the colony on becoming

ing established in their new home, is to ascertain if their queen is among them. This takes but a short time, and if it should chance to occur, which it very rarely does, that the queen is not among them, they leave the hive forthwith in search of her. Having satisfied themselves that the queen is among them, they lose no time in making the hive air and water tight. With a viscous substance called propolis which they collect from the leaves of willow, lime, and other trees, they coat the interior of it in the most perfect manner. One of the bees, who may be considered the architect, next lays the foundation of the plates. These are arranged vertically, and extend downwards from the roof of the hive, and from side to side. To economise space one plate serves as the base for two sets of cells, which are, of course, built at right angles to it. The shape of these cells is that which our reason enables us to perceive allows the very largest number to be crowded into a given space. The royal cells—that is to say those which are intended for the reception of the eggs from one of which the future queen is to come—are, besides being larger, different in shape; and, instead of being built on the plate like the other cells, are attached to the cells themselves. As by this arrangement the mouths of several cells are closed and rendered useless, the royal cells are no sooner abandoned than they are cleared away, and common cells built on the spot. The desire to economise space is exceedingly strong in the bee; not only are the cells of the form best calculated to gratify this instinct, but the walls, though very tough, are wonderfully thin.

All insects are precocious, and the bee is not an exception. When five days old, the queen begins to lay eggs, an operation which is performed with considerable ceremony. Her majesty, attended by as many workers as can conveniently witness her proceedings, first examines the interior of every cell, to ascertain that it is in proper order, and, having satisfied herself of this head, she turns round and backs into it, her attendants ranging themselves before the entrance, and waiting her exit with respectful immobility; though Wildman, whose opportunities of observing bees have been very great, says they bow the head before her, and caress her with their feet and trunks while she is engaged in this interesting duty. The number of eggs which she deposits on one day differs from another; but, assuming that she enters on the average two hundred cells a day, it will be seen that she pays dearly for the honours accorded her; and, barring accidents, this duty is continued from the commencement of the warm weather until the end of August. Considering that there is only one queen in each hive and how much depends on her preservation, it is not surprising that the community should be thrown into great confusion if she disappears. Every bee, as it receives the announcement that the sovereign is missing, hastens to spread the news, until, in a short time, the whole hive is in an uproar. As soon as it

is certain that the sovereign is really absent, the royal cells are examined to see if there is any nymph ready to emerge. If so, she is released; but if the occupants are only in the condition of larvæ, the bereaved community must wait their development. It will be said, if the accident happens to the queen before she has deposited eggs in the royal cells, how then? Well, even in that case they have a way of getting over the difficulty which is most remarkable. They select certain cells containing larvæ of working bees, and demolish the cells and occupants of those immediately adjoining each of these, so as to enable them to enlarge the cells of the particular worms they select for conversion from working bees into queen bees.

The worms selected are fed with a jelly-like substance for the usual period, after which the cells are closed, and the development proceeds in due course, the result being, that instead of a common working neuter emerging from the cell, a perfect queen appears in all her glory. In the event of there being no eggs available for this particular purpose, it is said that the bees fall into a state of anarchy, and adopt extreme communistic principles, each devouring all the honey it can seize until all has disappeared. Then they disperse, and either join themselves to other communities, or lead a vagabond kind of life, terminated eventually by the cold. Instances of this occurring are very rare, and a man might keep bees all his life without meeting with a case of the kind, but it is open to any bee-keeper to make the experiment.

Some lovers of bees are so blindly devoted to them that they will not hear of their faults. According to those, bees are incapable of stealing, fighting, or any minor peccadilloes. This, as a rule, holds good with respect to a colony the members of which are related to each other; but it would not be advisable to place two hives in close proximity which had been brought from distant parts. As for robbing each other, they would find that difficult, but there would probably be more fighting than would be consistent with the most profitable employment of their time.

IN A SINKING STATE.

THERE are agencies working gradually but substantially to undermine the constitution of Florida, the rich southernmost peninsula of the Confederacy, more effectually than "secession." Alarmists might even hold that if the civil war should last many years longer, the ultimate fate of the devoted State will cease to be a mere political question.

The most dangerous enemies of the soil of Florida are what its inhabitants call "Sinks." Those absorptions of the earth, though on a small scale; are, in fact, so numerous, that one may almost ask: Is Florida slipping between the fingers of both Federals and Confederates? and will she ultimately—like those high moun-

tains of the Andes during the earthquake of Chili in 1646—vanish entirely from the surface of the earth?

All over the country I found, when in that sinking State, sinks of all sizes forms and ages. Some are slight saucer-like depressions, others, still deeper, like basins, of from twenty to eighty yards across; or only uneven slopes and hollows, which would pass unnoticed were one not informed that the land just there had been "sinking" since such a time; or that an old inhabitant remembered a dead level where, now, there are various dells, crowded with vegetation.

Sometimes—and these are the most remarkable—the sinks are round and even, like wells, which, indeed, one might suppose them to be, so regular and perpendicular are their walls. Some of these are formed suddenly, during or after heavy rains, and are the result of one storm. They are sunk perhaps in an hour, in a night, without sign or warning; in the middle of the road, of a garden, or it may be a cattle pen. On one plantation I know of several such sinks. One is about thirty feet deep, and eight or nine across; another is twenty feet deep, and about four across the mouth. Sometimes it is not possible to distinguish the real bottom of the sink, for after the soil has been washed down to a certain distance, leaving a smooth, regular hole, jagged rocks are laid bare, and the opening to a subterranean passage, it may be of vast length and depth, is exposed.

Many accidents, as will be imagined, have occurred from the opening of these sudden cavities when persons have been travelling on dark nights, and passing, as they supposed, over an even and well-known path. Generally, however, a significant crack in the ground appears as an admonitory warning, and it is not unusual to hear a person say, in pointing to a certain spot, "There will be a sink there soon." Wonderful caves are by these means being frequently discovered, and they abound most in Western Florida.

Some of the sinks occupy an indefinite time in process of formation, and become larger and deeper during every rainy season. When rambling in a rocky dell, or climbing up the gorge of a deep ravine, whose sides are clothed with the richest vegetation, and from whose base the lofty magnolia overtops the neighbouring oaks and hickories that root upon its summit, it is strange to be told that one is down a sink, and that all this picturesque beauty, this fruitful area of some hundred yards across, is the result of twenty or thirty years' growth. The narrow, well-like sinks have here enlarged into ravines, or dells, or gorges, according to the nature of the ground. Occasionally a spring bursts into existence, and soon a rich deposit of earth produces an abundant growth of shrubs and flowers, which, under those almost tropical skies, will in one season clothe the rugged walls with beauty. On the same plantation before mentioned there is a spring which flows in a stream under the ground, and expands into a subterranean lake of

above an acre in extent. The entrance is at first a very narrow aperture in the rocks, which has been exposed by a sink, and through which a man can with difficulty squeeze himself. Thence a descent of several feet into another well, or sink, discloses a second opening, through which a vast area is discovered. Close to this is another subterranean well, which must be of remarkable depth, for if a stone be thrown into it, a minute elapses before it is heard splashing into the water below. Tradition says that these two wells were sunk by the Indians in searching for lead, but the story is too improbable to deserve credit, particularly as many such wonderful caves and wells are in constant process of formation before our eyes.

It is true that lead is found in those parts, as is also the plant *Amorpha canescens*, which is said to be an indication of its presence. The owner of the plantation assured me that several specimens of the loadstone, or a mineral locally called the "lead-stone," one certainly possessing highly magnetic properties, have been found in that spot.

An intelligent American traveller, who wrote of Florida in 1822, when it was the recently acquired territory of the United States, mentioned that some of the lagoons, or "clear water ponds," of which the St. John's river appears to be almost a succession, were "said to be unfathomable," adding, "it has been conjectured that a subterranean communication exists between them," and that "it is asserted that a spring of fresh water rises in the ocean to the south of Anastasia Island, a few miles from the coast." The writer goes on to state that he "had conversed with persons who averred that they had seen this fountain, and drank fresh water from it." The subsequent discoveries of the caves in Western Florida, and the progress of the science of geology, induce a more willing faith in this assertion, at the present day, than seems to have been yielded at the time in which that traveller wrote. As we have also learned that the submarine inequalities of the Gulf of Mexico are greater than those on its northern coast—for there are no real hills in Florida—that there are submarine hills sixty miles south of Mobile, Pensacola, and Cape Blas, of from four hundred to six hundred feet in height, and as these numerous sinks bring to light a substratum of rugged rocks wherever they occur—our imagination may wander back to the ages long past, and picture to ourselves the formation of a country, this fertile Florida, from the débris of the Gulf, upon its unequal surface of rocks; among which subterranean springs are for ever wearing for themselves a passage, and down through whose inequalities the loose sand and soft alluvial soil are often sinking, and thus producing an ever-changing surface.

An example of the underground course of a river occurs in Western Florida, at a place called the Natural Bridge, where the Chipola suddenly disappears. It flows away without any perceptible rush of current, under no visible

arch or hollow, but beneath the low flat bank, where its width and its winding course give it rather the appearance of a large pond. About half a mile off it again reappears in the same undisturbed manner. The intermediate country is a flat and swampy wood, but about a quarter of a mile in another direction is one of the largest caves that has yet been explored. The entrance to this is from a rocky bank in the midst of the thick wood. There is nothing in the aspect of the place to suggest the idea of the vast and magnificent amphitheatre that lies hidden within. The ground rises slightly by a tangled path, a rocky bank, to the top of which one can reach to pluck the gorgeous wild flowers that, under the Florida skies, are luxuriant, even beneath the thickest foliage. There is a low irregular arch in the rock, and down, quite close to the ground, on one side is an opening barely large enough to be crawled through head foremost.

This cave is a favourite resort for pic-nic parties and "fish fries," to which all the young people within twenty miles delight to resort. The Chipola river abounds in delicious fish, and the day's entertainment consists, first in getting the fish, and afterwards in eating them. While the anglers are busy at the Natural Bridge, others are rambling about the woods and twining garlands with which to decorate the spot chosen for the feast; and, at a cool and respectful distance, the black attendants of the party are "building" great fires, and preparing for the "fry."

The feast of fishes over, an excursion to the cave is next on the programme. Each member of the party must be his or her own torch-bearer. Yet not exactly so; for the smoking torches that were first used to illuminate the place were found to deface the delicate whiteness of the roof, and have been, by general consent, discarded for the more dainty wax-taper, with which each person is now provided. The next business is to select a guide. Moreover, gentlemen do not go unarmed into those dark recesses, which are not unfrequently resorted to as hiding-places by runaway negroes and lawless ruffians: and some very terrible encounters have occurred between such people and the picnic party of intruders upon their concealment.

Our experienced and deliberate guide, therefore, first bends low with his ear to the ground at the mouth of the cave, and listens cautiously. All is silent. Slowly and quietly he creeps through the aperture into the darkness. Again he listens breathlessly, while the party in the outside world await his voice with eager expectation. At length the welcome sound, "All right!" is heard from within, and the next of the pioneers throws himself upon his knees, and stretches forth his hand with a lighted taper to his invisible comrade. When some half-dozen gentlemen have disappeared, and announced themselves to be safe within, the ladies grow courageous, and, attired for the occasion, creep, hands and knees, into the cave. The first

danger is the greatest, for on entering they find themselves upon a narrow and slippery ledge, along which they must crawl several feet before they can stand upright, and thence leap down upon what may be called the floor of the cave. The jumping gives rise to much merriment; but at last the timid maidens are all fairly landed, and as every person after the jump lights a taper, the effect of the gradual illumination is very exciting. As each additional taper casts its glare around, column beyond column and arch above arch appear, till there is light enough to show the wide chamber, embellished with cornices, pedestals, candelabra, and hanging imagery of every conceivable form; beyond which the distant walls are lost in impenetrable darkness. Stalactites of various lengths hang from the roof, or have dripped into fretwork down the walls. The exact reverse of the proverb that "the dropping of water wears a stone" is here observed, for the droppings from these rocks have added stone to stone. On one side is a series of arches, through which visitors pass to other chambers; on another is a massive pedestal, upon which seems to rest a Grecian vase. Here and there columns, fluted or beaded, and crowned by capitals which are adorned with spreading feathers, support the shoulders of magnificent arches. One may ramble for hours in this labyrinth of grotesque architecture, on ground as varied as the roof. Now the taper must be held low to avoid a chasm; now all must cling fast to the nearest object while clambering along a slippery acclivity; now one can walk erect, and lift the taper high to examine the rich beauty of the roof; and presently creep under a low gallery to reach a crystal spring, of which every one is eager to drink—for much good fortune is supposed to be secured in a draught of its icy water.

Of course there is a "lovers' leap," the Rubicon of the enterprise. It is a sudden and difficult descent of some six or seven feet, where the ladies are fain to submit to be lifted down, or run the risk of breaking their necks by a "lone leap" off the dangerous rock. Nor are the gentlemen slow to relate to their fair companions how a reckless and too independent "Northern girl" fell with great violence from this rock in attempting to jump from it alone, and was borne back, with a broken leg and almost lifeless, over the intricate ground; how she was compelled to be dragged unconscious through the narrow opening to the light of day, and was with difficulty conveyed home; and how the accident had put a stop to all that year's pic-nics and explorations.

Not the least picturesque beauty of the place is the grouping of figures about this "lovers' leap." On each side some of the party range themselves to concentrate the light upon the spot. An artist can wish for no better opportunity of studying attitudes, and the play of lights and shadows, than he would see here. Two stalwart figures at the foot stand with uplifted arms, to assist the slender girl who bends

bashfully forward contemplating the leap. Some of her exultant companions, already safe, are winding their way up and around a defile beyond; each with her taper held above her head. Others are waiting on the ledge, in tremulous anxiety lest they should be left the last to grope their way among those gloomy recesses.

By degrees the lights have vanished, and only two or three remain, glimmering like sparks in the profound obscurity. There is yet one distant chamber to be sought, and away run the last of the leapers to overtake their unseen companions. And now they have wandered far from the mouth of the cave. Already they have lingered too long, the tapers are flaring rapidly away, some are already burnt out, and others are growing unpleasantly short. Suddenly the thoughtless throng awake to a sense of danger. A general cry is raised:

"We shall be left in the dark."

"Take care of your candles."

One, more prudent than the rest, exclaims, "Blow some of them out, and save them."

Immediately all the party recal the circumstance of three or four gentlemen having lost their way, when the cave was not so well known as now, and spent, I do not know how many hours, or days, groping about in the darkness; so, with overmuch promptness, puff, puff, and out go the candles, one after another, till a sudden gloom gives rise to fresh alarm; for now there is equal danger of darkness with plenty of candles at hand. Order is at length restored, and the steady ones of the party having secured a few of the longest tapers to be kept in reserve, the giddy pleasure-seekers put themselves in train, and require no further urging to scramble up the lovers' leap, and retrace their steps to daylight.

The extent of this cave is said to be about one hundred yards, but I doubt if it has been very accurately measured, or even thoroughly explored. There are many others of the same character about the country, to some of which access can be obtained only from the water. Several are along the banks of the Chipola river, and one, said to be very extensive, opens from a spring, which has expanded into a small lake, known by the name of the Blue Spring.

These "clear water ponds" are of remarkable beauty. The Blue Spring is ten or twelve miles from the Natural Bridge, and is as popular a resort of pic-nickers as is the cave just described.

The inhabitants of Florida enjoy life in a manner which, in our dewy and misty England, we should scarcely associate with either health or comfort. It consists in a custom of "camping out," or leading, for a time, a gipsy life to the letter. A family, or several families, with their attendants, a supply of food and other essentials, provide themselves with tents, and form a little social encampment on the banks of some inviting stream or lake, where they live

for a week or two, amusing themselves with hunting, or fishing, and growing fat upon the fruits of their sport; luxuriating in the purest of baths, and reposing amidst the loveliest scenes that nature can provide. The one great drawback to their perfect felicity is the danger of being, in their turn, devoured by insects, but the inhabitants either get used to the insects, or the insects to them; and as their purpose is enjoyment rather than occupation, the *dolce far niente* is not greatly interrupted by the necessity of perpetual fanning in self-defence.

No more lovely spot can be imagined than this Blue Spring, which takes its name from its deep transparent waters, through which the bed of bluish or opal-green rocks is as distinct as in a picture. To sit in a light skiff, and float down with the imperceptible current of these waters, is the most magical enjoyment that can be conceived. Only over the immediate spot, where, deep down among a cluster of rocks, the spring oozes forth, is the perfect transparency of the water disturbed. In every other part one seems to be floating in mid-air over dark ravines or smooth masses of white and coloured rocks. Sometimes their summits can almost be touched; then as we look over the boat's side, we seem to be hung in air over a chasm forty or fifty feet deep, and to the very depths the smallest objects can be distinguished, washed clear and clean and beautiful. Aquatic plants, and the "long moss," with its coral-like rootlets, and fine pine-like sprays stretching hither and thither, are expanded into graceful masses of dark green plumes, gently moved by the action of the boat, waving, yet almost motionless. There is motion enough in the current for pure and beautiful life; a silent though strong but imperceptible motion, typical of life itself—fresh, vigorous, young life. If there be Undines and Water Babies in this beautiful and unlearned world of ours, they must surely dwell in that "spring of silvery brightness," amidst "those resounding crystal vaults, through which heaven, with its sun and stars, shines in," and where below "still glitter noble ruins high and stately, and gently washed by loving waters. That which dwells there is pure and lovely to look upon, fairer even than"—the world above.

Fortunately the banks of this beautiful spring are firm and rocky, or knotted with the giant roots of the wide-spreading water-oaks and other forest trees, up which the trumpet-flower and honeysuckle climb, and upon whose overhanging lower branches we can step from our skiff, and seat ourselves in a natural arbour, from which there is a view down into a sub-aqueous landscape of surpassing beauty.

I said that fortunately the banks are firm, because in Eastern Florida, near another lovely piece of water called the Silver Lake, a sink occurred where a party was bivouacking, and they returned from a ramble to discover that all their victuals and drink had suddenly gone down into the bowels of the earth!

Very odd-looking stones and fragments of rock are scattered over the surface of Western Florida. In some places they have collected in such numbers that they seem to have been brought there. These localities are pointed out as Indian battle-grounds, a vulgar belief prevailing that the Indians fought battles there, and used these stones as missiles of war; but I observed that they had always accumulated where there was a depression in the ground, and that they lay in great quantities in deep hollows. They were of all sizes, and generally full of cells and cavities more or less rounded, as if some softer substance had been washed out or worn away. Others had a jagged cinder-like appearance, and others again had only rounded or noduled surfaces. Whether these fragments have gone through fire or water to make them thus, I cannot pretend to assert, but it seems much more probable that they have been left there by the washing away of the looser soil, than that the proud Muskogees had accumulated them to hurl at the rebellious Seminoles, or that the latter would have stood passively in one spot without returning the compliment.

One might suppose that Secession must be indigenous to Florida, morally as well as geologically. The Seminoles, who seceded from the Creeks or Muskogees, and derived their name from the fact, are now reduced mainly to the small remnant who have retired to the extreme south of the peninsula, and it is a singular coincidence, that negroes, then as now, were the source of the family quarrels.

The sharp arrow-heads of chiselled quartz that may be picked up in the same localities, are more characteristic implements of Indian warfare, and have, no doubt, done more effective service. We have read of their being sent from the bow with such power as to pass through the body of a buffalo, and one was found pierced through a human bone, with which it had been buried.

CASH TERMS.

MONEY transactions were, as all the world knows, in the first instance matters of barter. The word for money, which survives with us in its adjective "pecuniary," was Latin for cattle, and we have it in our own tongue when the law talks of our goods and chattels. Sir John Mandeville described as "precious catelle" the divine ransom of humanity. When he meant animals, he called them bestes or bestaylle. If a man who used cattle for cash, wanted to buy anything with his cattle, he had to find somebody who wanted oxen and cows, and who possessed also, and was willing to part with, that which he himself happened to want. If a lady now went shopping in Regent-street with several droves of oxen behind her carriage, instead of gold in her purse, she would find some difficulty in getting a silk dress for a bullock. And if the good old system still prevailed, great would be

the confusion among cashiers in the shops. Fancy them giving change out of an ox, in sheep and pigs, while Lady Arabella, having nothing smaller than a fat pig, which she pays for a pair of gloves, looks with dismay at the five cocks and eleven tumbler pigeons offered her as change. What a Noah's ark of a cash-box it would be that contained a day's ready money in a house of business carried on under such difficulties! Money all alive must everywhere have soon gone out of fashion. There must be something that could really be put in a box and kept; for that, indeed, is what cash means. It is *caisse*, the money-chest, under which head French book-keepers enter the money actually paid in. In the islands of the Southern Ocean, they take red feathers as cash; in Africa, cowries, of which a sackful represents but little money; and elsewhere they take gold and silver valued by their weight, as commodities rare enough to have an intrinsic value. A small bit of gold would equal in worth as much corn or other bulky stuff needed by men, and gold would cast into lumps easily carried about and transferred, and therefore very readily received in barter. But then there was a difficulty. Gold and silver varied much in degrees of fineness. Before taking a mere lump of gold in exchange the receiver had to weigh it and to test it. And so in very remote days it was found that an official stamp set on each bit of metal by supreme authority was the best way of giving such immediate assurance of its weight and purity as would enable any one to receive it with confidence as of a determined value. The stamping is expressed in the word *coin*. Some tell us that *Kauna* means, in Arabic, to hammer, forge, or stamp, and that from the Arabs in Spain came the Spanish *acunar*, to stamp or coin money. But the source of the word is probably not more remote than the Latin *cuneus*, or wedge, with which the stamping was effected. Everywhere the right coinage has been vested in the sovereign, who claims also the right of determining the value at which each of his pieces shall be current. Now-a-days, in a great commercial country, gold and silver coinage must have an actual value answering to its professed value, or the hands of merchants will be tied. Formerly, kings who were short of cash made money by diluting the coinage, as a dishonest publican makes money by diluting and doctoring his beer and gin.

Blackstone held that the Sovereign of England has no lawful right to do that. The sovereign settles the weight, alloy, and value of coinage by indenture with the Master of the Mint, and may proclaim any foreign money to be current in the kingdom. But the royal power to assign nominal values, is at this day, with general consent, exercised in the case of our new bronze coinage, in which the pieces are not, like the old copper pennies and halfpennies, fair pennyworths and halfpennyworths of the metal used. In Sir Edward Coke's time, no copper money was known. That—except its use for a short time, as well as gold or silver, in the later

British period, the reign of Cunobeline—was first issued among us less than two centuries ago, in Charles the Second's time, to be current under certain limitations. British money of Cæsar's time was coined on brass or iron. The Anglo-Saxons and the Anglo-Danes coined silver and brass, but the Anglo-Normans rejected the brass and coined only silver, till, in the reign of Henry the Third, gold was introduced into the Mint. For several centuries there were no coins but of gold and silver. For a long while the lowest silver coin was a penny, and that in times when the penny was equal to about a shilling in the money of the present day. The poorer English were not supplied with the halfpennies and farthings needed in their small daily traffic, till the reign of Edward the First. After this, silver rose in value, and the farthings dwindled in size until they went out altogether, in the reign of Edward the Sixth. James the First struck farthing tokens of copper and brass, but they were worth so much less than a farthing, that they were little used, and not long current. The first real copper money was coined by Charles the Second in sixteen 'sixty-five, but that was not made current; the true beginning of our copper-currency, though made in the same reign, dates seven years later. The same king made also an experiment in coining tin, and the poverty of James the Second drove him into endeavours to coin money out of old gun-metal and pewter. That was not what we understand by sterling money, though what it is that we exactly do mean by sterling money antiquaries are not very sure. The word *esterling*, or *sterling*, is not found to have been applied to our coinage before the fourth year of the reign of Henry the Second. If it was then first used, it probably was not derived from the Saxon *score*, as *steering*, *guiding*, or *regulation* money. A very old writer said, that as *florins* were called from the Florentines, our *sterling* money was named from certain *esterling* workmen from the north-east of Europe, who were employed upon the regulation of the coinage. At any rate, the word *esterling*, or *sterling*, was taken all over the Continent as a phrase for English money, and the fineness of our silver coinage expressed by it has been maintained now for six centuries.

The first gold coins were of pure gold, that is to say, twenty-four carats fine. A carat, according to one derivation, was the bean of an Abyssinian tree called *kuara*. This "carat bean" equals in weight four grains of wheat from the midst of the ear, another ancient standard. The ripe bean varied so little after gathering, that it was used as a weight in Africa for gold, and in India for diamonds. But in estimating gold, the word *carat* is used theoretically. Any piece of gold is said to consist of twenty-four parts or carats: which may be all gold, in which case it is gold of twenty-four carats: or which may contain one, two, three, four, or more twenty-fourth parts of alloy, in which cases it is said to be gold of twenty-three, twenty-two, twenty-one, twenty, or fewer carats

fineness. For example, six parts of alloy in the twenty-four, leaves eighteen parts of gold; that is expressed by saying that it is gold of eighteen carats. The twenty-four carat gold money established by Henry the Third was reduced a carat in fineness by Edward the Third. Henry the Eighth coined gold as low as twenty carats, and made also twenty-two carat crowns of gold, which established a standard of crown gold. That is the degree of fineness which has been adopted since the reign of Charles the Second as the sole standard of the gold money of England. On many Anglo-Saxon coins, the name of the coiner or moneyer answerable to the king and country for the produce of his Mint was stamped, in addition to that of the sovereign; and in the early Anglo-Norman times, when money was sometimes found to be debased, the moneyers were punished. But they had special privileges and exemptions from taxation, jury service, and distrainments: with the one disability, that they were not free to leave the kingdom without special license.

When in those old times, besides the paramount Mint in the Tower there were lesser mints in different parts of the country, the maintenance of uniformity and the sole charge of the mystery of the dies was entrusted to an officer called the *Cuneator*. This office, like some offices connected with the Royal Forests, was hereditary, though it did not, like the hereditary rangerships, continue to our time. When the subordinate mints were abolished, the office passed out of use, and, probably dying out with some family, passed also out of existence.

Though Edward the Third was driven by want of money to dilute the coinage, he ought to have been ashamed of his want when he had such a mine as *Asmolc* says he had in *Raymond Lully*, who had been brought into England by *Cremor*, Abbot of Westminster, and agreed to make the king rich by his art, on condition of his making war against the Turks. Edward failing in his promise, *Lully*, tradition says, refused to go on with his work, and was put in the Tower. But what money he coined was "made by the magic of alchemy, and mystically inscribed on the reverse with a Latin text round a cross fleury, with *lioncux*, reminding those pharisees, the wise unbelievers in alchemic gold, when they had a piece of it in their hands, that Jesus passed out unseen through the midst of them." *John le Rous* and Master *William de Dalby*, reputed to be able to make silver by the art of alchemy, the same King Edward ordered his officers to find and bring to him, safely and honourably if possible, but forcibly if needful. And in the reign of Henry the Fourth it was by statute solemnly "ordained and established that none from henceforth shall use to multiply gold or silver, nor use the craft of multiplication; and if any the same do, that he incur the pain of felony in this case." It was too horrible to think that any one should use alchemical knowledge in base advantage over his neighbours, and while they toiled and moiled for earnings hardly won, had only to put a pound into the pot and

boil it till it thickened into ten pounds. It was especially horrible, because the art of that pot-boiling was unknown to needy majesty. Had it been known at court, the pot would never have been off the fire. Who, indeed, would not like to be taught by an alchemist how to make such-Mint sauce.

And what of the Mint? Mynet was the form given by our forefathers, the Anglo-Saxons, to the Latin moneta, whence our money. A Mint they used to call a mynet smithy. And if money be moneta, what is moneta? Moneta is the goddess Juno. It was the name given her in consideration of the great number of admonitions or warnings with which she had favoured the Romans, and, according to Cicero, in particular consideration of one warning when, on occasion of an earthquake in the city, a voice was heard from her temple on the Capitoline, crying, "Sacrifice a sow that is in the family-way!" In the temple of that Juno Moneta, Roman coin was produced, and thence called also moneta. That origin of our words money, and mint was signified by representations of the goddess Juno upon Roman medals, with the hammer, anvil, pincers, and die that were the implements of coining.

Our Mint is bound by law to transform into coin any gold bullion brought to it for that purpose if of standard fineness; but, practically, it is the Bank of England that does nearly all the business with the Mint in exchange of ingots of bullion for coin. The word ingot, now applied to the small bar of metal, was originally the name of the mould; thus Chaucer's alchemist

—put his ounce of copper in the crosslet,
And on the fire aswithe he hath it set—
And afterward in the ingot he it cast.

The German for it, is cinguss, in-gush, from the German equivalent to the Dutch ingieten, to pour in.

Of our separate moneys the terms sovereign and crown speak for themselves. For the guineas, when they were first coined in sixteen sixty-two, the gold used was brought from Guinea. A shilling puzzles the philologists. The word, formerly seill and scilling, is said by some to be derived from a Hebrew verb meaning to weigh; by others from the Moesogothic skula, a debtor, because therewith fines were paid; others connect it with shield, as bearing the shield or arms of the prince who issues it; others derive it from the Latin solidus, a coin of the time of the Emperors; others derive it from the word in all Teutonic languages that expressed a large coin stamped with a deep cross so that it might be broken into smaller change; German scheidemünze, Swedish skilje mynt, Danish skille mynt. Seylan meant in our old language to divide. As for penny, it is our present form of an ancient word, not only Teutonic, but also Bohemian and Magyar, which signified money in general. Why it had that sense, nobody knows; but in Magyar, while penz means money, pengni means to ring. Farthing

is fourthling, originally the fourth part of any coin. Thus there is old mention of nobles, half nobles, and farthing nobles.

UP AND DOWN THE WORLD.

In travelling we see a hundred things, trifles often, which—far less from their intrinsic value or importance than from some circumstance associated with them, or from their addressing themselves, we hardly know why, to some peculiar perception in our mental organisation—fix themselves in our memories; and years afterwards, it may be, and without any recognised appropriateness to the time, place, or circumstances among which we find ourselves, shine out, as it were, like stars in a dim sky.

In the wakefulness induced by protracted illness, especially in that stage of it when suffering has ceased to be acute, and to it has succeeded the physical languor accompanied by the bright, though wandering and desultory mental activity that often marks the commencement of convalescence, these visions of bygone experiences start out with curious distinctness.

How many times, when sleep has held aloof from all wooing, when I have heard the slow hours strike in apparently endless succession, have watched the white moonlight creeping like a transparent stealthy ghost all along the wall of my chamber, have heard the crowing of the first awakened cock, have noted

The casement slowly grow a glimmering square

—how often, as if to take me away from the weary wistful time, has come some recollection of "days that are no more:" not sadly, nor "wild with all regret," but with a quiet brightness and reality singularly soothing!

Now, I go back to old childish days in Ireland, the first place from which my recollections date. I see the rambling old house, covering, with its dependencies, ground enough on which to build a hamlet; erected at different periods, in any and every style of architecture that suited the taste or convenience of each succeeding possessor; with great, seldom-used state rooms; with smaller rooms in dozens; with long, echoing passages, across which a rat would often dart in the twilight, scuttling away into cellars, vast as catacombs; with a kitchen that would take in many modern six-roomed houses; a fireplace where you might roast an ox; and walls decorated with the fronts and antlers of the largest deer shot on the estate for many generations, among which, at Christmas, were twisted holly, ivy, and laurel, and on whose tynes were wont to perch and sing familiar robins, seeking hospitality from the cold without.

In the sunshine lay around acres of neglected garden, wildernesses of roses, flowering shrubs in a thousand beautiful varieties, all blossoms that could live perennially with scant care and culture, and despite frequent visitations from the inhabitants of a rabbit warren, grown so over-populous that woods and fields swarmed

with the creatures, whose white scuts might be seen flitting and disappearing by dozens in every glade and opening of the wide beautiful park, with its slow river, its forest-like woods, its silent grass-grown drives, now and then unexpectedly blocked up by a fallen tree, or obstructed by a fox earth or badger hole, of whose presence no one but the beasts of the wood, or a stray poacher, perhaps, became aware for months. A sad, lonely, lovely place, which so impressed my childhood, that even now when I think of it there returns a sense of the mysterious, half-terrified, fascination some of its most solitary spots had for me. I remember how, when quite a little child, I used to wander to them alone, timidly looking and listening, gaining courage by degrees to lie on the grass, and watch

The freshness of the space of heaven above,
Edged round with dark tree-tops, through which a
dove

Would often beat its wings, and often too
A little cloud would fleet across the blue.

And so remain entranced till a sound—the sudden whirr of a bird's wings, startled to find the solitude of the place invaded, the rush of a rabbit through the dead leaves, the beat of deer's hoofs, the creaking of an infirm tree, would suddenly fill me with the unreasoning panic that often seizes a child's mind without any sufficient cause, where a moment before all was peace and security—would cause me to spring to my feet, and fly homeward at the top of my speed, panting, trembling, yet ashamed to own the cause of my emotion.

Later comes a vision of other woods, other fields, other streams, wilder far than those of my first memories; for between the two roll miles upon miles of Atlantic billows.

Far away, into regions hardly trodden by the foot of the European, stretch the woods; into the far wilderness roll the prairies; the fountain-heads of the rivers rise, who shall say where? *Here* is good cause for caution, if not alarm; often have I come on a tree, with bark newly scratched and torn by the claws of a bear, tufts of whose black hair would be found adhering to some jagged cleft; lynxes and loup-cerviers were not unfrequently seen at short distances from the homesteads; sometimes, even in the home-fields, the morning found one or two dead sheep, the bodies untouched, the throats only torn, and sucked dry of blood, by some unknown ravager, dainty in his horrible greed.

A great silence is in those woods; no bird sings among the branches, which, so dense is the forest, rarely wave with the breath of the wind. At times a woodpecker taps hard and strong on a decayed trunk; now and then a quick squirrel, with chirp and bound springs by; or, if water be near, a slow tortoise crawls through the rustling leaves; or a spruce partridge, a bird as large, and nearly as handsome as a pheasant, with a tuft of black feathers, burnished with metallic greens and blues at either side of its neck, depressed or elevated at pleasure, struts among the moss, hardly condescending to take wing,

till you are so close that a well-aimed stick or stone can knock him over. Sweetly on the ear, as you wander in the summer-tide, breaks a singing ripple, and following the sound you come on a clear little amber-brown brook, trickling over mossy stones, golden sands and smooth pebbles, warm to the touch where a sunbeam falls on them through arching boughs. Glittering trout flit to and fro, or hang in mid-current, poised on slowly-waving golden fins; minnows dash about the shallows, awkward cray-fish crawl among the stones, meteor-like dragon-flies flash across the gleam and gloom.

"The Falls"—they had no other name—were a favourite summer pilgrimage with me and mine. Although the actual distance was not great, the intricacies of the route, through dense trackless forest, thick with unyielding underbrush, and necessitating several fordings of the winding stream into which we plunged unhesitatingly, made the excursion a somewhat formidable undertaking. But how well worth the trouble! Suddenly the woods opened; before us lay a deep basin, bordered with glistening sand; on either side, black rocks, softened with patches of vivid moss, bright lichens, trailing creepers, rose sheer from the water, crowned with straight pines, and in front,

Like a downward smoke,
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn did go,

as the cascade softly glided from its shelf of rock: no thunderous torrent, but a languid sheet of glistening gauzy silver, so little disturbing the basin below, that the ripples ceased to throb on the surface ere the water kissed the shore.

Full of trout—so unsophisticated that a line, a float, and a worm at the end of a hazel or alder rod, captured them by dozens—I have known them take a wild strawberry—was this basin; and as we never visited the Falls without such simple fishing-tackle, the rod being supplied on the spot, the chief ingredient of our sylvan feast was easily procured. The fire was quickly lighted, the baskets were opened, the potato-pot was hung over the blaze, the frying-pan was prepared, and the hapless trout transferred in a few minutes from the rippling pool to the hissing lard. To spare the feelings of sensitive readers, I should premise that as soon as the fish were taken from the water they were killed by putting a finger into the mouth and bending the head upward; this, breaking the vertebral column, causes instant death.

Bright were the prairies, intersected with singing rills, for that part of British North America is "a land of streams," dotted, as are also the woods, especially in spring, with lovely wild flowers—the pink exquisitely scented almond bell; violets, blue and white; twin-berry, with polished leaf, blossoms like jasmine stars, always growing in pairs, and succeeded by the scarlet fruit, whose double growth gives it its name; dog-tooth violets; moccasin flowers; stately tiger-lilies; snowy crocus-like blood-root, whose bulb, when broken, emits thick crimson drops, said to be valuable in medicine;

luxuriant creepers; a hundred other sweet and lovely flowers of unknown name. Harmless little snakes rustled through the "lush grasses," bright green frogs chirped musically by the streams, cicadas sounded their "clip clip" like fairy seamsters cutting out their summer garments; field-mice, large, and sleek, and beautifully marked, scudded almost from beneath your foot; little brown birds made their nests in the tufts of grass; and clusters of scarlet strawberries stood up like bunches of rubies among their spreading leaves. And then, perhaps, when the summer has nigh spent itself, and the earth is dry, and the woods quiver in the hot air, and nature is silent in the heat, a spark from a homestead, or from the pipe of a labourer, or the ignition that may arise from the accidental friction of dry inflammable matter, sends forth the destroyer, and miles upon miles of forest and field become roaring masses of flame, then tracts of black desolation, without a leaf or blade of greenness. The prairie soon recovers its verdure—is, indeed, benefited and fertilised by the fiery baptism it has undergone—but the forest' long years fail to restore it, and not any scenery that I have ever witnessed—and I have travelled through an Irish turf-bog and desert sands—can in any way compete in dreariness with one of these devastated tracts. From the black cindery earth, stand up, as far as the eye can reach, endless columns of black cindery ghosts of trees; no bird can find shelter for its nest, no beast can find food or hiding, no flower can bloom, no leaf can flutter. The silence of death, the darkness of desolation, brood over all; the sun cannot cheer it, the summer rain cannot freshen it, till the healer, Time, shall

Reconcile the place with green.

And though he cannot bid the dead bones of the primeval forest, live, he calls up from the reviving earth grasses, little plants, mosses that need small nourishment, to prepare the way for tender saplings, destined to comfort the place once more with life and verdure.

Not far from our woodland home was a log-hut of the roughest build and materials, called Agnew's Camp. Its builder and sole inhabitant was a man whose mode of life and history formed a subject of mysterious comment and conjecture among all the scattered homesteads of the settlement. It was generally supposed, I know not on what grounds, that Agnew was the son of a gentleman, who, for some unknown misdeed, had fled, or been expelled from, home and friends. A good deal of romantic interest was excited about the silent solitary man, who lived utterly apart from all human companionship and sympathy. But, unfortunately for the romance, Agnew turned out to be only a vulgar thief. A gentleman farmer living some five or six miles from Agnew's Camp, one morning missed from the field, a horse and a sheep; ere long the horse returned alone. It was noticed that he had but three shoes, hence a clue as to the direction of his nocturnal expedition. The path

was tracked by means of the unshod hoof, to the log-hut, and there was discovered the carcass of the sheep, which Agnew had borrowed the horse to carry. He was arrested and imprisoned; whatever became of him on his release, he never returned to his camp, which soon fell to decay.

Often in the winter, came round parties of Indian hunters, with wild fowl, skins, and cariboo meat. They were in general a harmless race, very grateful to those who treated them kindly, but with "wild justice," implacable in having vengeance for injury. But already fire-water had commenced its destructive agency, and it was no uncommon sight to see in the streets of the town the once lithe grave dignified hunter, or the elderly squaw—I never saw a young Indian woman intoxicated—stupified and brutalised by the influence of the raw rank new rum sold at all the public-houses at a trifling cost.

To-night the wind howls, and there is a sound among the trees as of waves breaking on a far-off beach, and the sound carries me to a spot on the Norman coast, where, in a valley nestling amid the bare falaises, I have lain o' nights in a cottage room and heard the wind and the sea making moan together. Such an out of the world corner it was, with a little population of which all the men were fishermen, and all the women lace-makers, and where both men and women, not to say children, spoke a barely intelligible, often a wholly unintelligible, patois, in a loud high wailing tone, the voices of the first being generally small and thin, and those of the second hoarse and deep. At mid-day, or in the afternoon, came in the fishing-boats, and there was a crowding to the beach, while the fishermen in seven-league boots—which, if they fall into the water, fill and surely drown them—waded to and fro with creels of living, leaping, gasping fish; plies and grosyeux, and soles and lobsters, and ugly sea eels, and uglier skate, and queer pink and white soft-looking fish, and hopping shrimps, "sea fleas," as the Arabs aptly call them.

And then buyers and sellers would chaffer and chatter, and beat down and cry up, and gesticulate and wail and scream over the floundering ware, until the sale was completed and the cargo carried away in baskets, to be disposed of at Bayeux, Caen, and other neighbouring towns and villages.

A small adventure happened to me at this place. From the bedroom I occupied, a flight of stone stairs led down on the outside of the house into the little garden where, within the enclosure of a low dry stone wall, a few hardy vegetables and flowers braved the sea-breezes; quitting the garden, you came on the steep narrow pathway that led, through a breach in the cliffs, to the sea. One night, while dawdling to bed, as is my wont, my attention was called to a slight noise at the door which opened on this staircase: a sound as though something touched the lock. I paid little heed to it, until it was repeated; then I listened, but as I had turned the key, I felt little uneasiness, and as there was no repetition of the sound,

which had, indeed, been so slight as to be hardly worth notice, I—testing it by the consideration that had I heard it by day, I should have paid no attention to it—dismissed the subject from my mind, and went to bed and to undisturbed slumbers. Next morning, according to custom, I opened the door, which gave full upon the sea. My eye was caught by a darkish stain on the stone stair. I looked down the flight; another and another, all the way to the bottom; the unmistakable print of a bare wet foot. Whose, or why there, I never found out.

"Saint Nogatte," as its inhabitants call the Breton village of St. Enogat, is a place to be visited by those who want the bluest sea, the most silvery sands, the loveliest lonely bays, the simplest life, the most kindly people, and unlimited green figs at a nominal price: figs large and luscious and melting, peeling at a touch, plucked from vast trees, in whose spreading boughs you may climb and nestle and hide, with the ripe fruits clustering within reach all round, and the great leaves shutting out the noonday sun. Such breezy downs as the place has, and thatched cottages deep in vines and fig-trees and half-wild flowers! Such a beach, without a stone; such water, so clear that the sunny ripples are reflected on the sunny bottom, and the particles of sand you stir, glitter like atoms of silver through the wave they never stain. Such moonlights, and oh such sunrises! Coming in in glory of crimson and gold through your window, with mingled odours from the dimpled sea, and the thymeey downs, and the dewy gardens!

And then the kindly good simple folk, with the native courtesy that springs from such kindness; their hospitality, their cheeriness, so different from the cold hard mistrustfulness of the Normandy peasant; their legends full of poetry. Arthur figures in them, and Guinevere, and Lancelot, Merlin, and Viviane; the forest of Broceliaunde, now called Bréscilien, where the "wily maid" found Merlin; and the Gré de Mœn, where she imprisoned the simple sage; are not far from here. The Island of Avalon, where Arthur sleeps his long sleep, is off the coast.

I wonder why there comes across me now, the recollection of a room I spent a night in, at Lille. Hundreds must have occupied it, for it is a room in the railway hotel, close to the station. If I ever saw a room, or indeed a house, that told its own tale of fallen greatness, it was that room, and that house. The great salons on the rez de chaussée are tawdrily decorated as salles de restaurant, but their noble proportions remain; the wide stone staircase is dirty, and

along the corridors the doors are numbered, as hotel-room doors are wont to be, and some of the bedrooms have been vulgarised by flaring modern papers. But my room was hardly altered since the day when Madame la Marquise, reclining among lace and cambric on her alcoved bed, received her morning visitors, and sipped her chocolate from the déjeuner service of rose du Barri. Large it was, and lofty; the walls completely lined with wainscots carved in wreaths and medallions; the frame of the vast chimney-glass, and the tall mantelpiece, matching the rest, and forming parts of the fixed decorations of the room; and round the arched windows, with their deep recesses, and seats, and round the broader arch of the alcove again came the rich and graceful carvings. But perhaps the most curious thing in the room, and that most suggestive of the wealth and fancy of the former owners or occupants, was a pair of splendid Chinese doors, one at either end of the alcove; false doors probably, or enclosing closets. They were of black Japan, with human figures, birds, fruits, and flowers, in relief, and coloured like fine enamels, and with large gilt ornaments with rings, by way of handles, in the middle of each. Most French people, especially of the ancien régime, have a passion for "Chinoiseries," and doubtless these specimens, purchased at a time when communication with the Flowery Land was on a very different footing, represented a sum of money startling in amount.

And now Madame la Marquise sleeps elsewhere, more sound than she did in the carved alcove; and her sacred chamber is an inn-room, where any one can lie that has a few francs to pay for his night's lodging; and her salons are filled with little tables, on which hungry travellers eat hasty meals at so much per dish, and, if they think of it, say, so passes away the glory of the earth, and hasten to catch the train.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER IX. IN HOSPITAL.

THE charitable gentleman with the clean crisp whiskers, who had lent his phaeton for the insensible Fernor, was a Major Carter, who, with his son, had newly come to Eastport. At the foot of his letters he wrote, "Yours sincerely, Henry Deane Carter;" his son signed himself "Somerset Carter," having received that name in compliment to a Lord Alfred Somerset, "the man who first took me by the hand," said his father very often and very gratefully; and father and son, and Mrs. Carter, had taken the first floor of one of the villas on one of the terraces, and were come to live economically at Eastport.

Not that this was made profession of, or was even hinted at, by the small public of the place. There was a sort of little Prado down near the pier, where a band sometimes played, and where the men and women came and sauntered; and here the crisp major, so clean and dry and wiry, so brushed, so speckless, so yellow in his gloves, and with little boots almost reflecting the company like small speculums, first entered, as it were from the wings, upon the Eastport stage, and attracted the whole audience in pit and boxes.

He knew a few people already, and, leaning on the arm of the thoughtful boyish son, had put the canary glove into several hands. He had a pleasant gay face, like a little open pleasure-ground (fenced on each side by a little light shrubbery of crisp whisker). He was the most "youngish" man for his years, and had always a smile of eternal welcome upon his face: which smiles were not, however, without something mechanical about them, suggesting the idea that his face was fitted up with snowy-white jalousies, like a foreign villa, which he threw open all together when accosting a friend.

In a few days, by some mysterious process, he knew most people—most people, at least, that ought to be known. The people that ought to be known knew that he was a desirable addition to society. They told each other often about Lord Alfred Somerset, and used this nobleman as a tonic. The mention of that name, received with a sort of reverence, was found to be

about as invigorating as Jesuit's bark to the languid system of the place. He was delightfully well bred, needed no social valet-de-place to take him round drawing-rooms, but subsided without violence or exertion into general acquaintance. There are people who are thus never strangers in a strange country, and float into company and friends.

In that little corner the accident was a tremendous source of excitement. It lent a prestige to the race. There was some noise and confusion on the course, in which Mr. Madden's frantic cries were to be distinguished; and from that hot and brick coloured racing stratum, which greased its hair, and swathed its neck in a yellow cloth, confining it with a glass pin, came loud charges of foul play—charges marked into bars, as it were, by loud execration. The stewards, indeed, held a sort of investigation on Mr. Madden's indignant requisition. And there were many witnesses for Hanbury, but the best witnesses of all were his own honest temper and open soul—familiar to all the riding men. His profound grief was a spectacle, and excited sympathy.

Fernor was taken in slow and dismal procession to the house in Raglan-terrace. Some one had run on to give notice. The parlour was hastily got ready. Mrs. Manuel, surprised and aghast at what was intended, made a sort of protest, but was frantically overborne by Hanbury. A crowd followed and hung about the place, telling the story with relish to inquisitive passers-by. Insensible still, Fernor was carried in, and Major Carter, who had the command of the whole party, and who gave orders with a skill and judgment and readiness of resource that evoked respect from all, was, almost as of course, admitted into the house as a sort of friend whom they had long known. So, too, was the doctor and that young white-haired ensign also in sad distress about the friend he so revered.

Hanbury came in as they stood waiting in the drawing-room. "It is dreadful, isn't it?" he said. "I couldn't help it, I *couldn't*!" He glanced nervously at Violet, who was looking steadily away. "But the doctor says he thinks—he is sure, that is—it will be a very trifling accident. It was, *indeed*, half his own fault," he added, piteously, as if asking for comfort.

"Yes, yes," said the elder girl, "I am sure it was. It was unavoidable."

Her sister, with eyes resolutely turned away, had been half panting all this while, and now turned round suddenly, her cheeks colouring fast.

"O, don't say that—you must not say that," she said, hurriedly. "His fault? no. I saw it all. I had the glass. No, you shouldn't say it, you can't say it, you know you can't!"

"O, Violet! Violet!" said her sister, reproachfully.

As for John Hanbury, he stood gasping at her—all—"ébahi," as the French say.

"I saw it all," continued the girl, with the same excitement. "I shouldn't have said a word if he had not tried to put it on—that poor creature—who is lying below, and who can't speak or deny anything."

Hanbury gave a groan. "I never said so—indeed I never meant to say so—only I admit it looked so ugly and so wicked in me—especially after the way we left the carriage before the race."

The elder sister said, warmly, "No one thinks of such an idea, and as for Violet, I know *she* doesn't. We are all for Violet."

Violet cast down her eyes; she was a little ashamed of her sudden outbreak.

The doctor was now seriously at work on the luckless Fermor. An express had been sent for a greater doctor, who might arrive by evening. The two girls fluttered about, half way up, half way down stairs, uneasy and excited, the second strangely so. Every one that passed up to fetch some aid or appliance, she seemed to search with a look of anxious questioning. Major Carter was invaluable. He gave confidence. (Hanbury was of no more practical use than a child—was even in the way.) He was in the drawing-rooms, in the parlour, always pouring out liquid sentences in a low and steady voice; just as he would presently be pouring out "drops" from a medicine-bottle. He had known something of the "young man below." Lady Laura Fermor—who had been, you know, Lady Laura Stonchewer—he had met the whole family at Nice or Florence, or Aix-la-Chapelle—charming people. "No danger, I can assure you. I make it as a particular request you will not be uneasy. I know something of the man below—very safe and steady—attended an old friend of mine, Sir James Macgregor: but when Cade comes down, in his hands he is quite safe. There is no man in whom I feel such confidence, in any crisis of the kind. In any part of the world, I would telegraph for Cade."

In about three hours, Cade arrived, a thin swarthy man, in a very high-collared frock-coat. He did not lose a second. He was in a hurry to see what business there was for him to do, but, happily, by some fierce engines of the local doctors, a little life and feeling had been brought into that poor beaten, battered skull.

Mr. Cade turned back wet cloths, unwashed the head as if he were unrolling a mummy, pressed it firmly here and there, tapped it, looked at it reflectively with his own head a

little to one side, as if he were admiring phrenological bearings. When he had done, he conferred with his professional brother, seemed to agree with him, and then, as of course, picked out Major Carter. It was thus, by a sort of fixed and eternal law, that Major Carter was to affect any one into whose presence he came. Mr. Cade spoke, then looked nervously at his watch.

The ladies were waiting anxiously for the verdict of the medical jury. For one with whom they had so trifling an acquaintance there was no pretence of deep feeling or positive anguish. Still it was one of those "dreadful things" which, happening under our own eyes, with all the dramatic effects and properties of an accident, excite an almost artificial sympathy.

To them glided in the foreman, Major Carter, with the issue paper in his hand. It was a prescription.

"Well!" they said; together.

"Hush, hush, my dear madam," he said; "we must get this off first. There, now, Cade says he will do. No danger at present. I knew Cade was the man."

His listeners were so thankful, that they did not perceive this little encomium on Mr. Cade was scarcely just; for, unless he possessed the Royal Charm of healing by Touch, as yet his services had not gone beyond mere examination.

"And I think, my dear madam," continued Major Carter, "that by noon to-morrow we shall be able to get him away down to some quiet place." (He, too, had a sort of medical manner, solid and reassuring.) "I can quite feel how unpleasant it must be for you all, having this business going on here. But you know—common charity, my dear madam—common charity."

It was a relief to Mrs. Manuel to hear both pieces of news. She had hardly recovered the shock of their having a male, possibly a dying, invalid—cast down among them.

Mr. Cade was gone, having taken his confidential pecuniary farewell of John Hanbury. For these offices, to say the truth, he had looked towards Major Carter, as being the more prominent of the persons he had been in relation with, and had seen him retire with uneasiness. But John Hanbury performed the duty with even splendour.

CHAPTER X. A NIGHT SCENE.

THIS common danger and common excitement is a link of sympathy. By the close of this day they knew the white-haired boy-ensign, "Little Brett," perfectly. He showed a natural feeling that quite gained upon them, and though serving his poor friend had unconsciously brought about an introduction, this idea scarcely visited him. Major Carter was gone; but after dinner it was agreed between John Hanbury and Young Brett, both eager to do the whole duty, that each should relieve the other in watching, Hanbury taking one half of the night, Young Brett the other. Young Manuel, who, after the first sensation and earlier sympathy, had begun to look distrustfully

on the whole affair, now that it had gone forth there was to be an early removal, affected a show of interest and even zeal.

The two girls sat in the drawing-room till late, trying to carry out a pretence of being busy with their ordinary labours. But so great a domestic cyclone does not soon go down. The whirl confuses. With an agitation so recent, there is a sort of fascination, drawing all talk back to the one topic. They went over it again and again, with an ingenious variety. When recollection slackened, there was speculation for the future. But in all this the second girl took little part. Presently she went away, and repaired to her own room; for it was now all but midnight, and full time to think of bed.

She heard them all go up, and stood a long time at the window looking out, with her hair down upon her shoulders. Below her, she could see a square patch of light upon the ground, which was from the window of the room where Fermoer was lying with a dull numbed brain, sore and half-stupified. It was as if his head had been changed into a lump of rough stone. She could see the lights of the town twinkling far away down the hill, and these lights were in greater glory than on a common night; for there were revellers busy singing the Race, or drowning the sense of a sudden and fatal poverty. A few black figures would pass by trolling, and, with a halting gait, become bathed in the light from the parlour window. Then she sat down, looked long at the ground, and putting her hands on her forehead, over which fell her heavy hair, drew a long deep sigh of oppression, and shuddered. She was thinking of the day and its events, which seemed like a nightmare; and the shudder was for that horrid crash of men and horses and stone wall all mixed, which, though she had not seen, some one had described too graphically. Then she heard steps on the gravel, rose again softly, looked out cautiously, and saw Young Brett lounging slowly to the gate. He looked up and down the road, for he was getting fatigued with his watching, and was wishing to be relieved. Then he lit a cigar.

Still in a flutter of anxiety, she stole out upon the stairs and listened. She was indignant with this "selfish boy" for leaving his post at so critical a season. Uncertain and anxious, she crept down softly, and stood in the little hall close to the parlour. The hall door was open, and she could see that the "selfish boy" had walked away. At that moment she heard a sound of tossing and a deep groan, with a sort of half cry. She did not hesitate a second; she had a good deal of Spanish leaven in her, and entered the room softly.

Poor ghastly Fermoer, heavy, haggard, and revealed under the light of a waning candle, was writhing and twisting before her, with his arm drawn across his forehead. He was on the debatable ground between consciousness and dull lethargy. As he turned and writhed, he kept up a low groaning like an Irish kean. She did not

stop like an English girl, but full of grief and sympathy, went up to the bedside, spoke to him, and asked what she could do to soothe him.

His eyes settled on her with a dull stare, but she thought he did not know her, for he commenced his kean again. There was some cooling drink on the table close by, and she suddenly took it up and held it to his lips. It seemed to do him good, and he took it gratefully—then began tossing his arms again, and groaning as if in deep suffering. Quite helpless, she sank on her knees beside the bed, and covered up her face. He will die—she was thinking. So brave, so gallant; above all, so calm, and so all but victorious, as he had shown himself on that day. All but victorious: except for that dark and suspicious collision, and that strange meaning look, with which, just before the race, Hanbury had followed him. It was dreadful; and the half Spanish girl began to heave, and flutter, and grow agitated. "O, he will die! he will die!" she said aloud. "And what shall I do?"

Two figures were standing in the doorway, looking on with astonishment—one at least with admiration; for Violet's face seemed to glow softly through her hair, like a sunset seen through leaves.

"By Jove!" said one, under his breath. Hanbury, the other, gave a half groan; then suddenly caught his companion's arm, and led him softly out to the hall door again.

"What's this for?" said Young Brett. "I say, what are you at?"

"Hush!" said Hanbury; "not a word."

She had heard their steps, as he had intended she should, and rose up softly, half scared at the peril of discovery, glided out as softly, and fluttered up-stairs. From the top she looked down to the hall door, where Hanbury was busy pointing out a star to his friend. "What an escape!" she thought. John Hanbury was not thinking of that star.

He did not speak for some moments; then, roused by the groans of his friend, both went in, gave what was ordered, which presently soothed the patient into a profound sleep.

Early the next morning he awoke better. He had got back to sense and intellect, and almost his first words to Young Brett were (spoken wearily): "I had such strange dreams last night, or nightmares, which? Tell me. Come, was there any one here last night—any girl—or nurse—a beautiful creature?"

Young Brett, who had all the openness of a boy, and a boy's delight at a question to which he could give a full and satisfactory answer and thus gather importance, said eagerly and ardently, "O yes, dear yes. Such a surprise! When we came in last night about midnight there was the younger one——"

Fermoer motioned languidly upwards.

"Exactly. One of the girls kneeling there, in such a state—crying, I think. But, by Jove! I was not to talk to you. There, he down."

The old complacent languor came on Fermoer's

white lips, and the affected smile, as who should say, "Even in this ruin and decay comes the old story! Go on," he said, languidly.

He would have liked the particulars, just as he would be presently feeling a convalescent's appetite for a little chicken. But Young Brett, a little frightened at what he had done, would tell no more.

CHAPTER XI. A SPLENDID DEPARTURE.

WHEN the happy change was known, there was great joy. Hanbury was silent and grateful. A weight was off his mind. The doctor came early, and lifted it off finally, by announcing that he could not have wished him to be doing one particle better—which seemed a grudging sort of limitation to favourable wishes. But there was another trouble come into Hanbury's breast instead of the capital anxiety.

Still it was found that "we could scarcely move him to-day, my dear madam—scarcely!" The generic doctor was playing the piano softly and nimbly on his lips with his fingers. "I don't know but that it would be risky, too risky; we might lose all we have gained. N—o—o," he continued, as if the minutes of a council held inside him somewhere had just been brought to him, and he had to give his casting voice, "I don't think it would do. I would not recommend it."

Mrs. Manuel had all a housewife's terror of a residence of many weeks, perhaps; but, relieved from that apprehension, she rather liked the excitement. A couple of days more, and Fernor began to mend. Another day, and he was to be moved away to fresh, airy rooms, upon a hill, taken specially by Major Carter, who had proved himself through all the crisis one of the most collected, efficient men of business that could be conceived—so practical, so delicate, so friendly, and, above all, making his good offices more felt than the doer of them. The Manuel family actually came to look on him as an old friend. Hanbury, as the danger receded into the distance, passed from deep gloom, and even despair, into spasmodic delight and thankfulness: but from this stage again sunk gradually back into uneasy gloom and distrust. He came and went restlessly. He looked from face to face doubtfully. Since that night when Violet had been surprised at Fernor's bedside, she had recovered some of her old manner towards him; but this might have been to deprecate misconception, or even displeasure, and to secure silence. The sense of common danger had made such little misconception appear almost trifling. But now it began to be magnified—to Hanbury, at least—every hour.

It came to noon of the day of the removal, and a carriage, hired again by Major Carter, waited at the door. The invalid—the dull, bruised, confused Fernor—had been gradually fading out, like a dissolving view, and, in his place, were coming back the harder lines of the older sleepy-eyed officer who had dawdled into the saddle in the mauve jacket not many days

before. In a fortnight he would be well, or convalescent, and lounging about in an invalid's demi-toilette. Now he looked pale and delicate—almost interesting, as it appeared to the maid-servants. ("Lovely," one thought him.) As he was lifting himself from his sofa, Hanbury came in, with distress and doubt again seen on his forehead.

"O," said he, "so you are going, and I *do* hope you will get quite well. And I am sure I never shall forgive myself, and I know you will believe me when I say, solemnly and sincerely, and from my soul, that I never intended it—never! never!"

Fernor smiled his old smile for the first time since the accident. *It* had not been damaged.

"O, of course," he said; "who supposes it? Such an idea! It never occurred to me."

"O, I am so glad," said Hanbury, fervently. "I knew you would stand to me. And now, would you mind—but this is flurrying you, and we weren't to agitate you—"

"Weren't you?" said Fernor, coldly. "We should have thought of that a little earlier. Doesn't that strike you? But we may as well now finish, please, as you have got so far."

"I didn't mean—I did not, indeed. But O, would you mind just saying it over again to *them*?"

"Saying what, and to whom? Pray speak out. I really don't follow you."

"Why, you see," said the other, in fervent confidence, "it is most unfortunate—but she, the second one, has taken up some notion that it was done on purpose, and I must say it looked ugly; but, upon my soul, as I stand here, and if I were to go to my grave to-morrow—"

"Really you are fatiguing yourself," said Fernor, wearily, "and fatiguing me. I have told you what I thought already."

"Ah, true! yes!" said the other, a little vaguely, "so you did. But I want you, as you are going away, and may not see them again for long—"

Fernor smiled dubiously.

"You would do me such a service by telling them so."

"What," said Fernor, "that I am going away?"

"No, but about the race. The fact is, we are gone much further than you suppose. It is virtually settled, or understood, and but for this unfortunate idea—Indeed, if I could be capable of such an act, she is not to be blamed; so it is natural, you see."

"I see," said Fernor, "I see; it would quite account for it. Very well. Would you help me down, please, for I am as weak as a child."

He really was, and moved very slowly, step by step, on strong John Hanbury's arm. He reached the hall quite spent, and sank down upon a sofa. Wine had to be fetched hastily for him; in fact he had nearly fainted. The women were all full of sympathy. The maid who thought him "lovely" was looking on privately.

Nothing could be more effective than that pale face, so refined, so delicate in tone. His voice, too, was soft and gentle. It was an opening for a graceful retirement, and he knew how to make profit of it. There was a touch of pathos in the way he returned thanks for their kindness to him. He should not easily forget. He was not strong enough *now* to say all he was inclined to say, but he hoped they would understand him. At the same time, would they forgive if he were to say they were a *little* bit responsible themselves for the infliction of his presence, for if they recollected, Miss Manuel had all but challenged him to ride the race. Had she not, now?

A little flush came upon the second-girl's face, and her eyes stole over to the sister's with a glance of reproach. The idea had, indeed, occurred before now to Miss Manuel with some remorse.

"I did not do so badly after all, you see," he said, smiling; "and only for that stupid animal which our friend rode, should have done better."

Violet here was compressing her lips and beating her foot on the floor.

"By the way," he continued, "I had just time at the moment to see how he turned and lurched over on me. I saw *you* trying to keep him straight, Hanbury, but the strongest aims in England couldn't have kept that brute from having his way. Forgive me," he added, gaily, "but you know I never was frantic about him."

Hanbury looked round triumphant, and there was more exuberant gratitude flooding his cheeks, as from a burst sluice, than even triumph. The second girl turned away her eyes, then walked over to the window to look at the sea.

Major Carter now came bustling in, crisp and crackling. It was time to go. Would Captain Fermor take his arm? There. He had been up at Brown's terrace. He had been putting the last few final touches to the new and airy lodgings.

Fermor, propped up on the friendly Carter's arm, faded gracefully from the room. Wistful eyes followed him. Hanbury, brimming over, bounded down before him and about him with the exuberance of a mastiff. At the carriage door he gave Fermor a grip of gratitude.

"I shall never forget it, never!" he said. "It was noble—perfectly noble!"

And when the carriage drove away, he came bounding up again, with his tail wagging; for he was now fairly "rehabilitated;" perfectly cleared and made straight in his character.

Alas, how little he knew. It was only the "rehabilitation" of Fermor. For that bit of chivalry and generous testimony to one who was scarcely a friend, had painted in a sort of exquisite nimbus round his head as he retired. It was about as unfortunate a calling of testimony into court as could be conceived.

CHAPTER XII. A CONVERSATION.

THE little watering-place was gliding into its season. Fashionable brooklets came trickling in, houses were in demand, and house-rents high.

The natives looked on proudly, and said to each other that it was going to be "gay."

Among the same class there was an instinct that Major Carter, so newly arrived, was to be accepted as a being from the fashionable immortals, and took his place in a proper niche without effort.

Without effort, too, he had come to know nearly all men and women. They were delighted with his talk, inlaid with fine glittering names, like a mosaic with bits of lapis lazuli. He stood by, a conversational pointsman, and skilfully turned his train of talk into aristocratic sidings.

What passed in Fermor's mind as he came slowly up the stairs into his new rooms at Brown's terrace, was an impatient "This fellow will want to fasten an acquaintance on me!" and he thought, with the peevishness of sickness, what a penalty this was to pay for the few little offices he had received. He was laying out, with disgust, how, after a mess dinner, he should *insist* on a receipt in full, and coldly "drop the fellow," when Carter, having got him to the sofa, said, in his gay way:

"Now, good-by! You shan't see me again for weeks, until you are well. Positively no. And even then—I don't know, I am not a visiting man. I like to know a few people, not a whole town, you know. By the way, how do you find this place?"

Fermor raised his eyebrows, then said elliptically, "Well, scarcely!"

"Ah! so I should think. You want the 'Junior,' and 'Brooks's,' and Lady Glastonbury's box. Of course this sort does well enough for the common set, for your friends up at the fort, and *that* sort of thing. I tell you, you must get away from us as quickly as you can."

This was like a censor swung before him, and he accepted the fumes very complacently. "Don't go yet," he said, graciously. "Sit down—for a short time."

"Only for a moment, then," said Major Carter. "Though I recollect that Lady Gunning always said that those visits where one was in a hurry to go, turned out the longest visits after all."

"You knew the Gunnings?" said Fermor, with a little eagerness.

"O yes; used to meet her at Aix-la-Chapelle."

And on that text being given out, the two together broke into a sort of hymn of reminiscence, recalling in alternate versicles many fashionable names. This sort of communion service is in itself a great link of sympathy. Fermor, for so long in convalescent jail, was now let into the glare of daylight, and could breathe a little fashionable fresh air. The visitor was very amusing; knew of, if he did not himself know, innumerable "men," men of peace and men of war, and men of clubs, concerning whom he had newer and more recent news than Fermor could have; and though conscious of being made a little inferior by having to receive information, his zest for the details made him overlook the form of the channel of

this information. He was already rather inclined towards this Major Carter, but one little incident finally determined his inclination.

"By the way," said Major Carter to Fermor, turning back, "I am afraid, while you were sick, I took a serious responsibility on myself."

"How?" said Fermor, a little suspiciously. (Was he now going to encroach and get free and easy?)

"Why," said he, "there was a telegram written to your family at Nice, and——"

Fermor's cheeks began to colour faintly.

"Do you mean to say they ventured to do *that*? Bring them all over here! Was there ever such conduct? The thing I was so guarded against. Good gracious!" And in real distress, he half rose from his chair.

"I am very glad to hear you say so," said the other, soberly. "Don't disturb yourself now. I quite took that view, and ventured to interpret your wishes. That well-meaning, but not over-discreet person, the tall strong man, you know, was for telegraphing all over Europe, for everybody, in a sort of frantic way. I saw there was no use reasoning with him, so I took charge of the message, put it in my pocket, never sent it, and—here it is."

"Thanks, thanks," said Fermor, with more earnestness than he had exhibited for months.

"It is really a relief to my mind," said the other. "I was afraid I was taking a *little* too much on myself."

Then changing the subject, as if it were too trifling to be dwelt on more. "You won't be disturbed here. I took care to see about the neighbours. The house to the right is unlet, and the one on the other side belongs to an invalid, a girl in a consumption, with a grim old father—by the way, your landlord. I was quite scared when I saw him first. Good-by! Good-by, Captain Fermor."

Fermor said good-by with wonderful cordiality. He was pleased with his visitor's humble departure. "But if he had dared to 'Fermor' me. By Jove! I had made up my mind to cut him from that moment." For this was one of those little tests and gauges of gentility which an Officer of the Fashionable Customs holds ready in his pocket to apply on the instant. "I thought there was something of the gentleman about him. I generally pick out the right thing."

In stricter truth, the right thing had picked him out; but the invalid Fermor that night approved pleasantly of all the invalid Fermor had done. Specially did he revert to the graceful and dramatic fashion in which he had "backed" off the Manuel stage; then thought sweetly of the round-eyed girl, and that odd discovery, at which he smiled with half-shut eyes. A really charming creature; something so natural in the business. Yet was it not usually so? The whole little play seemed to him, as he lay back on his cushioned arm-chair, still with half-closed eyes, very sweet, and painted in warm soft clouds—

everything about it, even the utter rout of that poor boor, with his horses and horse-talk. He was thinking, according to his favourite formula, how your true-bred gentleman always must win in the long run, when that honest Young Brett, who kept at his heels like a rough simple terrier, came in.

Almost at once he broke into that little night adventure, and dwelt on it with wonder and admiration. He made no secret of his reverence for Fermor. "I don't know how you manage it," he said, with a sort of comic despair. "It's very odd; and with no trouble to yourself; while other 'fellows' might just put their eyes upon sticks." Fermor was a little anxious he should come to that subject, for he was misty about the details. His head had racked with pain just at the moment it was being told to him. But he was now too proud to have the appearance of being anxious to hear it again. The youth, however, was eager. Fermor had only to give him the catch word.

"Nonsense!" said he, calmly. "She was just passing the door, going to her room."

"Passing the door!" said the other, with an enthusiastic denial. "Well, if you call kneeling at a man's bedside, and praying, and crying—Why, I saw her myself; the lamplight was strong upon her face. By Jove! such a creature she looked! And her hair all tumbled down upon her shoulders."

This was like spoon-feeding to Fermor.

"And you take these things so quietly! I should have jumped out of the window, to think that such a lovely creature was praying over me."

Fermor started. "Nonsense!" he said.

"Surely you know it," said Young Brett. "Don't tell me. I can't make out how it is," he added, in a sort of piteous way, "some fellows have a knack of that sort of thing, and yet they don't seem to care about it, while other fellows—— But it's always the way."

"But you know," said Fermor, still enjoying the spoon-feeding, "it is that—that—other man. I never can recollect his name."

"Hanbury, Hanbury," said the youth, eagerly. "No, no; not he. It was all settled, but *his* chance is done. Poor old soul! I could tell him *that*. I can see a thing or two."

"Poor devil!" said Fermor, half closing his eyes with pity. "It is not his line, you know. That was the mistake he made. Every man has his line. As for what you say about me, my young friend—of course when a girl meets a gentleman, and puts him beside a creature without an idea above oats and mangers and that sort of thing, the difference *must* strike her. I don't take any credit for it. It would be the same with any other man."

After a pause, Young Brett said, "I told them to bring up Don. I thought you would like to have him, as he would be company for you. I got a house put up in the yard for him; you can see him from your bedroom window."

He was a "good fellow" this Young Brett, and it was not surprising that most people liked him. He was always doing some well-meant thing of this sort. Fermor thanked him languidly. "Very good of you, indeed. Glad to have the dog. Thanks!" He always said "thanks," not "thank you," as a more refined acknowledgment.

Fermor was fond of reveries and castle-building; such castle building, at least, as in the grounds attached he could make out his own figure strolling, with a divine air about it, like a god dressed in human clothes. These grounds and castles (he now reclining back on the pillow of his arm-chair, with eyes half closed, the tips of his fingers brought together) he liked to people with men and women of the courtier stamp, eternally bowing before him, seeking him out, and passing by rival gods to do him homage. He made himself speak, and loved to hear his own voice in a calm and quiet way, doing marvels. On this night he thought pleasantly of the day's work. His eye rested with pleasure on the half Spanish girl. Her devotion and personal worship, discovered so curiously, was most acceptable; he smiled as he thought of her. "*She is a lady*," he said, aloud; "the only lady among them all." The rest, indeed, had long since been sorted off into "cads" and "low creatures." "Very odd," he continued, musing; "she is just the sort of character I had always laid out I should marry—that is, if I *were* to marry." And he smiled again, as he watched her walking pensively through his grounds, mournful, melancholy—weeping almost—faithful, worshipping girl! Then, recruited by the little panorama, and really "fond" of the "poor child" (as he called her aloud), he went to bed.

He was fond of dogs in a negative fashion, and liked them for a sort of society. But this night his love for them was not strengthened; for about one o'clock he was awoken by the full barking of Don, who, though otherwise sensible, felt strange and uncomfortable in new quarters. From the bark of alarm it glided into steady, sustained, and dismal howling. Sleep was precious to Fermor; and, after an hour's impatient waiting, in the hope that it would abate, he got up and rang for his man. As he rang, his lip curled in the dark as it used to do in the daylight, and he chafed impatiently at the nuisance.

His man had been awakened also, and had long since been protesting in stronger language against the disturber. He went out as he was ordered, and beat the dog, which he was not ordered to do, then let him loose. He had been bidden to look round for robbers, of which there was no trace. In fact, it was but the dog's way of proclaiming that he was uncomfortable, and scarcely at home in the new tenement that had been hired for him.

About four in the morning he broke out again, and awoke Fermor once more, who, between his

teeth, said aloud, "I'll have him shot at once;" a sentence which he later changed into "I'll give him away."

A GLASS OF MADEIRA.

A FEW years ago the visitor to Madeira found the undulating hills and volcanic peaks on which the sugar-cane now flourishes rankly, still covered with vineyards. Forty different species of grapes produced wine. But in the autumn of 1852 the vine disease suddenly broke out, and still rages unchecked. With the return of spring arrives the deadly malady, whose sole cause is a small fungus, the oidium Tuckeri, which settles on the leaves, in the form of a fine white powder. The leaves dry up, and are unable to perform their function of inhaling carbon, and exhaling oxygen. The respiration and nourishment of the whole plant are checked, it grows sickly and ceases to bear fruit, and if not uprooted gradually pines to death.

The vine disease has not only entailed ruin on many respectable English merchants, but has also exerted a widely extended influence over the social relations of the island. When the first crop failed, twelve years ago, it was accompanied by the outbreak of the potato disease, and the two together produced starvation among the poorer classes. Several persons died of hunger, and more would have shared the same fate, had not the foreign merchants established in Funchal formed a committee, and obtained from England and the United States money and provisions to the value of eight thousand five hundred pounds.

It is estimated that prior to the disease the average produce amounted to about thirty thousand pipes, of which two-thirds were drunk on the island, or converted into spirits. In 1825, fourteen thousand four hundred and thirty-two pipes left the island; in 1855 only two thousand and eighty-five; in 1865 probably not a single pipe will be shipped. The greater portion of the exported wine naturally went to England; though latterly the consumption there has slightly decreased, while it has risen to the same extent in Russia and North America.

The enormous vintage of earlier years is now all but reduced to a cypher. Old real Madeira will soon be a rarity even on the island, and when vine-growing, for which the volcanic soil is admirably suited, will only possess historic interest. Of course the whole world will continue to drink pretended Madeira, which will hardly be affected by oidium, thanks to our enterprising wine-manufacturing merchants.

All the remedies employed against the disease were equally useless. Sulphur slightly checked the malady, but spoiled the wine; varnish protected the leaves from the fungus, but injured the health of the plant. At last the desperate resolution was formed of digging up the old vines, and planting young ones. Vines imported from Cyprus and elsewhere, after being pro-

perly cultivated for a while on the island, will acquire the properties of the renowned old vineyards, always assuming that they are not assailed by the disease. It is supposed that the first vines were brought to Madeira from Cyprus and Candia about the year 1425, and in time acquired first-rate properties through the character of the soil, and the magnificent climate. If Madeira vines be now conveyed to Cyprus, they produce for the first few years a wine very like Madeira; but they gradually lose their peculiar qualities, and eventually resemble the vines which have been growing for centuries in their native land.

Although the vine was naturalised in Madeira a few years after the discovery of the island, it was not cultivated to any extent till the beginning of the sixteenth century. In those days, we read further, the vintage usually took place in September in the south, and three or four weeks later in the north, according to the situation of the vineyards and their elevation above the sea. The rats and lizards, which propagated in enormous numbers, usually destroyed one-fifth of the crop; after the grapes were gathered, they were thrown into a clumsy wooden trough, and pressed by the naked feet of the vintagers. This primitive method of extracting the juice dates from a very early period. The pictures of the ancient Egyptians represent this process, and in the Scriptures, as well as in several Latin poets, passages are found which seem to prove that the ancient Hebrews and the tribes of Italy adopted this method.

When the first juice had been expressed, the remaining mass was collected, tied together, and pressed once more. The must (*mosto*), however, was collected in a tub, transported to the cellars in goat-skins, and placed there in casks, where the process of fermentation went on for four or five weeks, after which the wine was transferred to other casks for the purpose of being fined with eggs, bullocks' blood, or more frequently gypsum. Previously, however, about ten bottles of brandy were added to each pipe, in order to prevent the formation of acetic acid: this brandy was of home manufacture, being made of the worst sorts of wine, such as São Vicente and Porto Santo. A certain amount of water was also added to the dregs, and a fearful beverage called *Agoapé* (foot water) was thus produced, held in great esteem by the lower classes.

The wines were kept in cellars of moderate and settled temperature: the only exception was the *Tinta*, presently to be mentioned. The poorer sorts were submitted, for six months after fermentation, to a temperature of fifty to sixty degrees Centigrade: for the heat was supposed to render any further laying down unnecessary. By this violent process the wine acquired a certain flavour of age, but with it a dry and smoky taste, which could never be entirely removed. The better sorts, however, were laid by for years in the ordinary temperature. The best wines were produced along the south coast, and were probably unrivalled in

the world for bouquet, softness, and flavour. The reason why they have gradually sunk in the esteem of English consumers, will be found in the fact that, owing to the great demand for the wines, and their high prices, especially during the Napoleonic war, many merchants of Funchal were tempted to sell inferior wines as first class.

For the preceding remarks we are chiefly indebted to a wine-merchant of Santa Cruz, who has lived on the island nearly fifty years, has acquired an immense fortune, and is universally regarded as *the* authority on the subject. According to this gentleman, the following sorts were the most celebrated:

1. *MALVAZIA*, a bright-coloured heavy very aromatic wine, made from the *Malvazia candida*. It is possible that the latter word is a corruption of *Candia*, the native land of this grape. The berry is large, oval, and of a golden hue when ripe. The finest wines of this class were made at the *Fazenda dos Padres*, which formerly belonged to the Jesuits, and at *Paul do Mar*, both places west of Funchal. As this grape was very delicate, and easily spoiled, it was the dearest of all the wines: the pipe being put aboard for from seventy-five to eighty-five pounds, or nearly three shillings a bottle first cost. This wine is no longer exported, and the small stock still in existence fetches ten shillings per bottle on the island.

2. *SERCIAL*. A dry, bright-coloured wine, with a powerful bouquet, produced from the *Rhenish* grape. It was not drunk till it was eight years of age, but then it was considered by connoisseurs the best and healthiest sort. The young wine had an excessively disagreeable taste, and the grape itself was so sour and unpalatable that even the lizards would not touch it; which is saying a good deal. The cost price was from seventy to eighty pounds per pipe.

3. *TINTA*, or *Madeira-Burgundy*. A dark pleasantly-flavoured wine, made from the small black *Burgundy* grape. Its almost black colour emanated from the skins, which remained in the wine during fermentation, and imparted to it the astringent taste of port. It was usually drunk during the first or second year. After that period it gradually lost its delicate aroma and bouquet. The pipe fetched from sixty to seventy pounds.

4. *BUAL*. A pleasant wine, rather light, made from a handsome round straw-coloured grape, which had to be cut as soon as it ripened, or it dried up and yielded but little juice. This wine was equally good, whether young or old, and fetched from seventy to eighty pounds per pipe.

5. *DRY MADEIRA*—most made in the island, and most extensively exported—was composed of a mixture of various sorts. The best wine was produced between Funchal and the village of *Campanario*, especially in the districts of *Cama de Lobos* and *Estreito*. It was supposed that this wine was dried and improved by a voyage to the East or West Indies; hence it reached the London market under the name of "East or West India

Madeira," while that which was shipped direct from Madeira to England was called "London particular." This is the only Madeira at present procurable in Europe. The usual price was formerly twenty-five to fifty pounds the pipe, but after the outbreak of the vine disease, it became from fifty to eighty pounds. Other mixtures of different sorts produce Verdelho, Bastardo, Negrinha, &c.

It was generally assumed that an acre of average land yielded a little over a pipe of wine, but four pipes were the largest quantity ever grown on a single acre. The best soil for the vines was a mixture of red and yellow masses of tufa; a weather-worn basalt was also regarded as yielding soil, while a stiff clayey one was of no use. The grapes never ripened at a greater height than one thousand five hundred feet above the sea level; for, though vines were planted at two thousand feet, and bore grapes, the wine made from them was always of a very moderate quality. It was believed that if the grapes were to retain their good qualities, a fresh set of vines was requisite every twenty years. A great deal depends, however, on the soil, and the mode of cultivation. A vine which is carelessly attended to in poor soil, loses its virtues in eight or ten years: while the same vine, if carefully tended in good soil, will lose none of its distinguishing qualities in fifty years.

QUITE ALONE.

THIS Story will be resumed in the Number (285) for October the 8th.

MEDUSA.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

Herne Court, February 13th, 1863.

DEAR EDWARD,—I am not coming up. Your bill of fare does not tempt me. I don't want to see Bel Demonio: I saw the Duke's Motto, which was very much better. I don't care in the least about scenery and dresses, but I adore being harrowed. Ruy Blas, if you like! I have seen it four times, and am good for a fifth; or if they would only give that naughty little French play, which, in dear consistent old England, it is proper to sing but not to say, and in which I believe Fechter is absolute perfection, I would scatter decorum to the four winds, set William at utter defiance, and rush madly off with you to the stalls in no time! Only fancy! He—William—went to see it in Paris, and left me at home (though I was dying to go), and then he came back, and told me it was a very dull thing, and that I shouldn't like it: after which he went twice again himself. What a profligate old William! No; I shall wait till I see a good Monday Popular advertised, and then send you my commands as to places and so forth. London is so dirty and dismal at this season; no air, no light, no flowers. My conservatory here is already one mass of bloom,

camellias, rhododendrons, orange-trees, azaleas, and a perfect regiment of dear little hyacinths and narcissus, making the whole house smell of the spring—it is too pleasant to leave. Besides, the country, even at this season, is full of beauty, and gives one an impression of complete and pure delight twenty times a day. One's human resources in London don't give one that quite so often; even you don't, my dear boy, fond as I am of you. And you, when are you coming to Herne Court again? I have been carefully looking up all the marriageable girls in the neighbourhood for your especial benefit, and among them there are really two or three who I think would make your affair, as the French say. First there is Miss Laura Baker, a most cheerful active girl, with an even flow of great animal spirits (invaluable for you who have none); not very brilliant, perhaps, but so easily amused. Always laughing. About twenty-four, not very tall, dark hair and eyes, and a great deal of figure, nose perhaps a thought broad, and just a little bit suddenly turned up at the end; the mouth rather large—but a *thoroughly good* girl. Do you like the description? Then, a charming contrast. Little Amy Robarts, twenty-two, and flaxen hair; not quite so much conversation as Laura, but understands the old women, and is capital down at the school. Her only real drawback is a rather tiresome little trick she has of repeating one's own words over again to one; if you remark that it is a fine day, she answers, "Yes, it is a fine day;" and if you add, "Charming for driving," she immediately replies, "*Quite* charming for driving." But I feel sure that this proceeds in a great measure from shyness; and if you would only come down, and teach her to get fond of you, you could cure her of it, I have not the least doubt. The thing that perhaps tells most against her in society is, that she has one leg a *little* shorter than the other; it was an accident, poor thing, which, you know, isn't like having been born so, and one does not see it when she sits. I really don't think I should mind it so very much; would you? Oh! how I should like to see you once really thoroughly in love—utterly and miserably in love. It would be so pleasant, and so much better for you than going about for ever as you do, singeing yourself and every one else in a conscienceless sort of way to no earthly purpose. Think of it for my sake, now, do; and come down like a dear good boy, and look seriously at Amy and Laura.

Yours affectionately,

HARTY BRANDE.

61, Pall-Mall, 15th February.

Dearest Harty,—I am nailed in town by business, I am sorry to say, for the next week or two, and therefore quite unable to run down at present to Herne Court. How like your dear, funny, insensible (shall I say nonsensical?) self, your letter is! and how well one sees by it that you have always sailed in smooth waters. If you had not, you would not desire that your friends should be in a permanent state of con-

flagration, instead of merely taking a pleasant little occasional scorch. After all, you and I are very much alike (but for the priceless gift of enjoying which you inherit from my poor aunt, and of which, as you truly remark, I have little or none). We both lead placid contented lives enough, and both rejoice in the possession of undisturbed hearts. Why, then, do you always quarrel with me for a condition of existence which you so completely share? Or, can I be mistaken—and do you share it less than I imagine? Do tell me, were you ever in love, Harty? But “utterly and miserably in love,” as you say? Don’t be angry with me if I don’t give dear old William credit for having stirred the depths to that amount; and don’t be angrier still, if I ask if any one else ever did? No, it isn’t possible; you never would go hunting after great emotions, with that good unclouded child’s face of yours, as you do, if you knew what the words meant. In the mean time, I am afraid neither Laura nor Amy will do; neither of them seems to be the little darling I require. I think I fancy rather less figure—and I do mind the leg.

Yours affectionately,
E. S.

Herne Court, 16th February.

Your questions have not made me angry; they have only sent me into fits of laughter. You are perfectly right, dear Edward. I have not the remotest comprehension of the passions I read and hear of, and I own to an almost morbid degree of curiosity with regard to states of feeling of which I have not the smallest conception in my own experience.

You know what a secluded life we always led in the country. An unbroken sunshiny stillness of home affections and duties during all our happy childhood. We lost poor papa when we were too young to understand the terrible meaning of death: and since that, the only shadow that ever came to darken the clear days, was Minnie’s marriage. We had been dear companions in all our occupations and pleasures; we had never been away from one another in our lives before, and the separation fell very heavily upon my heart. Shortly after Minnie and George had gone abroad, when the sad blank of her absence was making itself doubly felt, now that the excitement of the wedding was over, just when I was at my very worst, in short, Mr. Brande came down into the neighbourhood to look at an estate which he had some thoughts of purchasing. He had been an old friend of papa’s, and mamma asked him to come and stay with us while he made his inquiries about Beech Hill; the place did not please him, but there were others, more or less near, to be seen in the neighbourhood, and so he stayed on and on, and at the end of two months he had found both a home and a wife to suit him: he bought Herne Court, and asked me to be the mistress of it. Mamma was overjoyed at the prospect of giving me into such safe keeping, and having me settled tolerably

near her; and William was so dear and good, so excellently kind to me when I was fretting about losing Minnie, and so perfect for mamma, that I was very sure I should never meet any one I could esteem and love as thoroughly again, and so we were married. There are as many as twenty-two years between us, but though he seemed to me quite an old grandfather when I married him, I believe I have got to think him younger by living with him. I know no young man, unselfish, tender, and guileless as he is. And although he did not “stir my depths” very violently (if I have any to stir, which I think doubtful), he has filled my heart entirely for the twenty years that we have been married, during which time he has honoured me like a loyal subject, served me like a devoted friend, and petted and spoiled me as I thought it was only in one’s mother to do.

And now for the second question, which I dare say you thought was sufficiently answered by what I have just said; and so it is—and yet it isn’t quite, either—that is, I have just a wee corner of conscience about it that makes me speak, at the risk of your giving much more important proportions to my small confidence than it ever deserved.

About five years after we were married, we passed a season in town, and became acquainted with a person whom William took an extraordinary fancy to. He shot like William Tell, he hunted like Nimrod, he drew like an artist, and the worst of it was that he sung like an angel, and that dear good William, who doesn’t know God save the Queen from Yankee Doodle, and had never cared about my singing in the least, must needs bethink him suddenly how good it would be for me to keep up my music, and was quite delighted to see my little talents appreciated by capable people, and so was I, I confess it to my shame. He continually asked this man to come down and stay with us, and he didn’t see that by degrees he was beginning to pay me more attention than he ought, and that I might end with getting more dependent upon his companionship in those pursuits in which William did not sympathise with me, than was desirable. Well, this state of things went on, and we sketched together, and we sang together, and we read German together, till at last, my life became agitated with an atmosphere to which it had been an utter stranger until then. I don’t mean to say that I cared for the man in the least; but he troubled me—don’t give the word more than its exactest meaning—he just troubled me. He never had said anything to startle me, or that I could actually lay hold of to take offence at; but I was made to feel that I was adored all day long; respectfully, but still adored, and though it was certainly sometimes a little distressing, I found it a little pleasant too. At last things came to a crisis; one of his long summer visits had just drawn to a close, and he bade us good-by, more than usually out of spirits at leaving us. He was to go abroad early in the autumn, and not to return before the following spring. I watched the carriage as

it drove away over the bridge, and then I went into the drawing-room, got my work-basket, and established myself on the lawn, with a sense of intense relief at being free of him. His manner during this last visit had got insensibly to be more earnest than it used to be; not content with the many hours which we naturally passed in each other's company, he would make occasions for being alone with me, which used to annoy me; he would go out fishing with William, and then forget some essential bit of tackle, and come back again to the house to fetch it; or agree to meet him at some particular spot, see him well started, and then pretend a headache to stay at home with me; and what enraged me more than all the rest was, that once or twice, in a sort of indirect covert way, he hinted that William's want of perception proceeded from his not having a proper appreciation of me, and from the indifference and apathy of age. He could not see that it was the guilelessness of the creature, who thought no evil, because he was incapable of it himself. To all of this I could oppose nothing, because he managed so cleverly, that I could not come to an explanation with him without seeming to assume that he had feelings for me to which he had taken care to give no open expression. It was a state of things that had worried me, and made his visit odious to me, and I felt thoroughly glad that he was gone. I put my hand into my basket, drew out my work, when lo! between the folds of it, I found a letter lying, neither more nor less than the most passionate of farewells from our departed guest. I did not know what to do; I did not like to conceal it from William, and still, I could not bear to tell him of it; it made me entirely unhappy and ill at ease: however, the man was going abroad almost immediately, we should not meet again for ages, and I made up my mind not to mention it. Of course I did not dream of answering him, and as he now took to writing invariably to William, instead of to me, as he had used occasionally to do, I thought my silence had been understood, and that his addressing me no more was a sign of grace.

We were expecting a large shooting party on the first of September; and on the twenty-eighth of August William was obliged to run up to London for a few hours upon business. When he came back, I teased him as usual for news, and asked him if he had seen any of our friends in town. I was perfectly aghast when he told me that the very first person he had met in St. James's-street was the hero of my story, whom I had already fancied well upon his travels; and still more so, when William added, "He seems altogether undecided about going abroad, so I told him he had better come down here for the first."

I didn't close my eyes all night, and got up the next morning in twenty different minds as to what it would be best for me to do. I could not bear to have him here again with that idiotic love-letter fresh in both our memories, and yet I hated to tell William what, in the

singleness of his heart, it was so far from him to suspect, and so I went thinking and thinking the matter over, while I made my rounds in the rooms prepared for our guests, to see that all was comfortable, and to leave in their portfolios and envelope-cases the necessary materials for writing. At last I came to the little room which he had always occupied, and the moment I got into it, I felt so suddenly suffocated by the idea of seeing him again with that odious common secret between us, that I made up my mind that as soon as I had deposited my little store of paper in his portfolio, I would run and find William at once, and not have anything hidden from him a single moment longer. I hastily seized the blotting-book—it accidentally fell from my hand, and out of it dropped upon the floor an open sheet of note paper, which evidently had been forgotten in it. It was addressed to a French lady, whose name was Irma, and began with, "*Chère vie de ma vie*"—and this, mind you, was only letter A of the performance—it went quite as far as Z, and further too, before it had done! It was in his handwriting, signed with his christian name (*only*), and announced his arrival in town for the very next day; so that he must have written it much about the same time that he was inditing that exquisite effusion, the remembrance of which had just given me such a very uncomfortable night's unrest. My Gordian-knot was cut! I had a hearty laugh all by myself, and then I enclosed him his two notes, merely writing, "With Mrs. Brande's best compliments" in the envelope; and on the thirty-first, just as I was going in to breakfast, I met dear old William with a letter in his hand, looking the very picture of disappointment: his friend had finally made up his mind, and had started for Paris the night before.

This, dear Edward, has been the only approach to a romance in the whole of my life, and the only concealment I ever had from my husband. I don't think I am made for great sensations; it may be a proof of inferior organisation—I sometimes think it is—meanwhile, in all humility I thank God for it; for it is perhaps in virtue of this very defect, that I am quite the happiest woman of my acquaintance.

Your affectionate Cousin,

HARTY BRANDE.

CHAPTER II.

MRS. WILLIAM BRANDE was a real lover of music; and she liked best the very best, which is a rare quality in those who pretend the most to be devoted to art. She lived almost entirely in the country, but contrived every now and then to take a run to London, when some particularly tempting advertisement lured her up to Exeter or St. James's Hall. Her husband did not care to lose a day's hunting by accompanying her. On these innocent little gaieties of hers: but she was never at a loss for a playfellow. She was sweet-tempered, natural, pleasant, and kindly, and at seven

or eight-and-thirty had preserved the eyes and forehead of a girl of sixteen. Childless women sometimes do keep to the end that pretty, almost infantile candour of the eyes; and it was poor Harty's only sorrow, that at Herne Court no little feet were to be heard pattering overhead, and no little voices filled the house with that sweet tumult so unlike and so much better than any other music in the whole world. She had a host of men friends of all ages, all more or less devoted to her, and she had but to hold up her little finger to ensure a willing companion at any time. Her chief ally, however, upon most of these occasions, was a cousin of hers—Edward Saville by name: he had lost both his parents, and was master of a very good fortune: but he lived more like a poor man than a rich one; had no expensive tastes, and not a particle of ostentation. He was now twenty-nine years of age, and his cousin and fast friend, Harty Brande, thought it high time that he should have done with wandering and idling, and that he should marry, and keep house, and settle down, like other folks. Two days after despatching her letter to 61, Pall-Mall, she saw an irresistible musical announcement in the newspaper, and Edward Saville received the following:

Dear Edward,—Such an advertisement in to-day's Times! Joachim, Hallé, and Piatti all together! Take places for Monday week; I am coming; and if you like eating horrible food, I can undertake to promise it you at my lodgings. But no, don't do that, dear—the dinners there are too nasty for anything, and though you wouldn't mind it, I should for you; so just leave the tickets for me, and we will give each other rendezvous at eight o'clock at the St. James's Hall.

I have made the acquaintance of a new young lady; the family has only lately come into the neighbourhood; we called when first they arrived, and, yesterday, mother and daughter returned our visit. I spare you the description of the mother; the daughter is tall, and fair, and large, and very yearning; and her name is Regina Thompson: she's four-and-thirty (I'm afraid you'd think that rather old?), but though she is altogether too ripe for a "little darling," you might perhaps make a sort of gigantic pet of her? I believe I would like to see you married to your great-grandmother rather than not married at all. You have lived in Germany till you have become nothing but a dreamer. It has been the ruin of you!

Your affectionate Cousin,

HARTY BRANDE.

P.S. I have had a lovely bullfinch given to me, and have hung him up between my linnet and lark. The bully is young and timid, and only every now and then hazards a few mellow little chuckles down in the very bottom of his throat, and this he only ventures upon in an occasional pause, when the linnet and lark have been answering each other by the hour together; but the linnet, who responds to every chirrup of

the lark, the instant poor bully attempts to open his mouth, lapses into rigid silence, sticks his stupid little grey head down into his stupid little grey shoulders, and makes himself an odious object of disgust and discontent. So vulgar of him! And so like the world, isn't it? I have seen two fine folks ignore a helpless nobody in conversation just in the same way, letting all his observations drop, exactly as if they had not been, and carefully addressing each other only, to his entire exclusion. I'm glad I don't live in a great town! Be sure you take the seats in time, so as to get good ones near the orchestra.

Mr. Saville secured the places as he was bid; and on the following Monday deposited Mrs. Brande's ticket, according to her order, at a small private hotel in St. James's-place, where she was in the habit of putting up upon these expeditions. He was surprised to find at the house that they had had no warning of her advent, and were not expecting her; he desired them, however, to keep everything prepared for her arrival, and at a few minutes before eight o'clock, he went to St. James's Hall, in the full anticipation of finding her already there, or, at all events, of seeing her appear shortly after himself. The places were the last side-seats at the end of the room, close to the orchestra. Mrs. Brande was not yet come, and her chair was vacant; he took possession of the one next to it, and looked about him. It was a very full attendance, and even the platform upon which the artists were to perform was crowded to suffocation by a less elegant, though not less enthusiastic, portion of the auditory. The concert had not begun, and he looked up and down the long lines of faces, in search of something pretty with which to beguile the time until either the musicians or Harty Brande should appear. Whole families there were of short people, with knobby heads and little curls, who followed the performance attentively in large music-books, which they had brought with them—waning virgins with Roman noses and large loose-looking teeth, wearing upon their heads edifices fatally fanciful, composed of aged flowers, tumbled ribbons, limp strips of black velvet, and rows of white beads, that hung on, or rather dangled off, the few straggling dark hairs still clinging feebly to the sides of divisions up which you fancied you might have driven a coach and four. Here and there you caught a glimpse of a fresh little girl, with blooming cheeks and a turn-up nose, whose healthy, honest, little face looked almost like that of an angel by contrast with the dingy multitude by which it was surrounded.

A noise of steps on the wooden staircase that leads to the platform, a burst of applause from the public, and Joachim and three other gentlemen in black were sitting ready to begin the concert. Mr. Saville, who was looking at them through his glass, felt a rustle by his side, and became aware that three or four places on the front bench, which, up to the present moment,

had been empty, were suddenly filled. He looked round presently at the new arrivals: they were much the same as the old ones, with the exception of the woman who occupied the seat nearest to his own, and who seemed as if she must be there by some strange mistake, so entirely dropped out of another world did she appear. When he first perceived her she was leaning back in a position of listless repose against the rail of the bench, with her face turned away from him. All that was offered to him for speculation was a tall, slight figure, without any crinoline, clad in a dress of violet velvet, made high to the throat; and a delicate throat that seemed almost too small and slender to support the weight of the great masses of fair hair which were loosely wound round a stately head of most noble shape, and confined by a magnificent diamond comb—the only ornament she wore: just thrown over her shoulders hung a mantle, also of violet velvet, richly bordered with sables. He watched in vain for a glimpse of her countenance; she was completely absorbed with the leisurely survey she was taking of the room, and was evidently looking for some one she expected to meet. At last she found the face she was seeking for, upon the platform; and immediately made a quiet, hardly perceptible, little inward gesture with her hands, pointing to herself as though she would say, "Here I am." Edward Saville followed the direction of this slight movement, and saw it smilingly acknowledged from above by a young woman dressed in a stuff gown of the commonest description, a rather shabby tweed shawl, and a coarse black straw bonnet. She had sharp features and a bright colour, and no one would have remarked a person of such ordinary appearance, but for the odd fact of her holding a grey worsted stocking in her hand, at which she was indefatigably knitting while the music went on, and for the still stranger circumstance of her relation (whatever it might be) with the distinguished-looking woman in the front row. Edward Saville and she were both at the extreme end of the hall; the woman in the orchestra was opposite to them and to their left; so that the violet lady still had her head turned away from him. The evening wore on, the concert progressed, and Mrs. Brande's place remained vacant. It was very unaccountable—what could have detained her? Or had she changed her mind, and altogether given up her expedition to town? This was not the only disappointment of the evening; he had reckoned upon hearing Piatti, but there was no sign of him; and Hallé's accustomed place at the pianoforte was filled by a lady, who was playing delightfully one of Beethoven's divine sonatas.

Mr. Saville began to think he must have made some extraordinary mistake about the day; he had no programme of his own, so partly to clear his doubts, and still more in order to compel his neighbour to look round, he determined to borrow hers. At the close of the slow movement of the sonata, he asked her for it; and, startled by his voice, she turned suddenly

towards him. What a face it was! Deathly white, with lips as colourless as her cheeks, and preternaturally large light grey eyes that swam in tears; they were eyes such as he had never seen before; so wistful, and woeful, and full of such a strange pale light. A pathetic Magdalene's face quite bathed in tears; and the unexpected apparition of this vision of sorrow, for a second, took his breath away. He recovered himself, however, and asked her to lend him the programme; she gave it to him with a quiet little bow, and then relapsed into her former half-reclining attitude, again looking up at her friend, who looked down and nodded and smiled at her. He glanced over the programme; Piatti's name was not mentioned. Miss Arabella Goddard was the lady at the piano; there was evidently some blunder about the day. He returned the paper with thanks; the lady took it with another slight inclination of the head, while a tremulous little smile played for a moment round her pale lips. It was a handsome face undoubtedly, but that was not the impression that predominated as one looked upon it; there was some painful want of harmony in the expression, which made itself felt above everything else. The upper part of the face was quite statuesque and cast in the grand mould of the Niobe; the mouth flexible, rather large, and vacillating in expression, was handsome too in shape; but its odd convulsive movement seemed to change the whole character of the countenance every moment. She was evidently extraordinarily affected by music; for while Joachim was playing a solemn adagio of Bach's, she shuddered from head to foot and seemed to shrink together; her face, from white that it was, grew to an awful ashy grey, while her eyes, stony and without speculation, became like those of a sleep-walker. Her appearance at this moment had something so singular and terrible about it, that the ladies on the other side of her could not help observing it; and one of them pulled a large bottle of smelling-salts out of her pocket, which she handled nervously for a few minutes, and then put back again, like the thorough Englishwoman that she was, not being able to muster courage to offer it. Edward Saville raised his eyes to the platform; the woman in the orchestra was looking intently down upon her friend, and once or twice shrugged her shoulders impatiently at the whole scene.

When the first part was over, the pale lady, who had seemed under some wicked ban, came to herself, got up, and walked towards a screen that stood on the right of the platform and close to it; her friend immediately left her seat, and came down to the other side of the screen, and the two remained at the opening, whispering together for some little time. Meanwhile, Joachim entered the room from the door on the left, and Edward Saville, who was acquainted with him, crossed over to speak to him. When the second part began, and he returned to his place, both the violet lady and her strange companion were gone.

He left the concert-room at once, rushed like

lightning down the stairs, with the vain hope of still being able to overtake her, and arrived at the entrance-door just in time to see her drive off in a hired brougham, attended by a very respectable-looking elderly man-servant out of livery. He had seen that she was quite alone in the carriage, and he turned back again quickly for the chance of meeting her companion; but she was nowhere to be found, and he went home in a state of unusual excitement. It was barely ten o'clock when he reached his lodging; he could not read, and so he sat down to write to Mrs. Brande. On turning over a heap of papers which lay scattered on his table, he came upon the letter in which she had told him to take the places; and on looking at it again, he discovered that, by some piece of carelessness, he had read Monday next instead of Monday week, and so the mystery was solved. His note to her was a very short one; he told her of his stupid blunder, and merely added: "There was no Hallé, no Piatti, Joachim played, but I did not hear him. Medusa was there;" which considerably puzzled his cousin, who plied him with continual notes upon the subject, but never got any answer.

On the Monday following the eventful Monday described, true to her original plan, Mrs. Brande came up to town, and, faithful to her appointment, drove up to the Piccadilly entrance of St. James's Hall at ten minutes before eight o'clock. She was a real child about her amusements, and always liked to be there ever so long before the beginning. She found her cousin, early as it was, already in waiting for her at the door.

"What have you been doing with yourself all day, you bad boy," she said, as he helped her out of the carriage, "that you never came to look me up, though you knew I was to arrive by the twelve o'clock train?"

"I couldn't, dear," he answered; "I was at a monster concert and couldn't get away; it began at one, and was not over before half-past six. I had got helplessly jammed in, and had to bear my fate as best I might, and bide my time to the end."

"Good Heavens!" she said, "what an ostrich's stomach for music you must have! Fond as I am of it I couldn't have done that, and then do this on the top of it; no wonder that you look dead beat! Was it a good concert? What did you hear?"

"Oh, a lot of things," he answered, carelessly; "I'm sure I don't know what."

"And who sang?" asked she.

"Let me see," said Mr. Saville. "Oh, a whole heap of people sang—everybody sang—I can't recollect who."

He had taken care to secure the same seats of the week before, and when they arrived, he noticed with emotion that the first six places on the front bench close to them were still empty. As the hour of commencing drew near, he was in a state of abstraction that at last became quite apparent to his cousin; he hardly heard what she said to him, and scarcely an-

swered when he had heard. The orchestra was filling by degrees, and he kept his eyes riveted upon the people as they entered.

"My dear Edward," said Mrs. Brande, "who in the world are you looking for among all those shabby people up there on the platform?"

"I am looking for a checked shawl and a grey worsted stocking," he answered. But he looked in vain. Presently a party of people rustled past him, the women's gowns as they brushed by filled him with a strange agitation. He recognised them—they were the people of the Monday before—and took the same seats on the front bench. There was the elderly gentleman with the red nose, the daughter with the spectacles and the big music-book, the stout mother with the pagoda on her head, and her bottle of smelling-salts in her hand, and they had brought with them a son of fifteen who took the place next to Mr. Saville, who could have kicked him. Our friend was in an irritable frame of mind, and the boy fidgeted him into a perfect fever. The youth's neckcloth was too stiff, and he craned his neck about incessantly; then his waistcoat was too tight for him, and he tried to ease himself by first unbuttoning the three upper buttons, and then buttoning them up again, and unbuttoning the four lower ones, so as alternately to relieve the different portions of his suffering person. Harty Brande was quite delighted with the boy; he had chilblains too, and after rubbing his wretched feet together, and making his boots creak till he nearly drove his neighbour wild, he finally kicked both his boots off at the heel, after which he sighed deeply and seemed rather better. Harty, who had a great sense of fun, was thoroughly wrapped up in him. Edward Saville thought with savage delight of the end of the concert, and the moment when he would have to put those boots on again. The music came, the music went; the evening had come, and was gone, and Edward had accompanied his cousin home, and was now sitting by a bright fire in her small drawing-room, moodily drinking a very good cup of tea.

"My dear boy," she said to him, "what ails you? You don't seem half glad to see me, whatever the reason may be; and I am so disappointed about it that I really don't think I shall tell you something which I had imagined would have given you pleasure."

"Yes, I am glad to see you Harty, dear," he said, kissing her hand affectionately; "but I am tired, and out of spirits, and the music and that hot room together have finished me. Decidedly London is a mistake at this season of the year; and to-morrow when you start, I think it not at all unlikely that you will find me at the station ready to accompany you back to Herne Court."

"Don't go to the station to-morrow, then, for if you do, you won't find me," she said, laughing; "this is exactly what I was nursing up as such a treat to delight you with—William has gone for a few days' hunting to the Digbys, and I have a holiday until Saturday. I thought

you'd be so pleased! But you don't even make the demonstrations that bare civility requires, and I feel quite mortified. I had meant to go everywhere this week, and had reckoned upon you for the partner of all my little dissipation."

"My dear Harty, I shall be delighted to go with you everywhere; but on Thursday I can go nowhere. My sister starts for Malta with her husband at eight o'clock on Friday morning, and I must spend the last evening with her. Besides, this last week I have given myself a sickener of music, and just at the present moment feel very much as if I would rather never hear another note as long as I live. Last Monday, I went as you know to that ill-fated place we were at to-night." Here Mrs. Brande burst out laughing, but on looking round at him, saw with surprise that he was perfectly serious. "On Tuesday I was at the Vocal Association—on Wednesday there was Benedict's concert—on Thursday I went to Henry Leslie's Choir—on Friday there was the Israel in Egypt at Exeter Hall—and on Saturday I was at Covent Garden. I can't go to any more music!"

"But, my dear Edward, what could induce you to go to these places in such frightfully quick succession?"

"Medusa," he said, with a nervous little laugh. She pressed him in vain for an explanation; she could get nothing further out of him. As he was bidding her good night, she kept hold of his hand, and said to him:

"Tell me who Medusa is?"

"Only a woman with grey worsted stockings, and a checked shawl," he answered, and left her.

CHAPTER III.

EDWARD SAVILLE had passed a feverish unsatisfactory week; haunted by the strange face he had seen at the concert, he had (as he told his cousin) gone by turns to every musical entertainment in London, for the chance of meeting that pale lady again. Everything about her seemed mysterious. That she was foreign he had no doubt, most probably German, he thought, as he recollected the circumstance of the knitting; and then he passionately regretted that this should not have occurred to him at the time. He had lived for years in Germany, and the language was as familiar to him as his own; if he had spoken to her in German, perhaps she might have answered him. At last, exasperated by all these unsuccessful efforts to see her again, worried by recollections he could not banish, and speculations that arrived at no conclusions, in a sort of spite at himself he made up his mind to think that after all she was probably only one of the many foreign women of disreputable career, with whom London is always teeming. Her costly clothes looked like the thing enough—so did her being there all alone—and then he remembered that irreproachable distinction of appearance, the quiet of her demeanour, and

the pale face and wistful eyes seemed to reproach him for his thought. If Edward Saville had had a profession, or an occupation of any sort, he would not have been subject to this kind of possession; but from a boy he had been his own master; and as, owing to his independent means, he had had life pretty much his own way, and had never met with anything like wholesome opposition to any of his wishes, while he was blasé upon all the ordinary pursuits and pleasures of most young men, he was capable of being roused to an almost insane degree of excitement by any adventure which seemed attended with doubt or difficulty. However, continual concerts had somewhat damped his ardour; and at the end of this week of disappointment, provoked with his want of success, he thought himself a fool for his pains, and made up his mind that nothing should induce him to pursue his wild-goose chase any further; and so he devoted himself very thoroughly to his cousin, and took her to all the places she wished to go to, except to Leslie's Choir; it would have brought his recent disappointment too vividly before his eyes; besides, he was engaged to his sister, and, as we have seen, he refused to accompany Mrs. Brande there. On Friday, when he was calling, he asked her how she had liked her evening.

"Quite charming," she said; "we had all manner of lovely things, and then wound up with Mendelssohn's Hymn of Praise, which I had never heard before. I never liked anything so much in my life, though I am free to confess that during the last chorus I only listened with half an ear to the music, for I suddenly caught sight of a face so unlike any face I ever saw before, and that looked so curious altogether, that I could not take my eyes off it."

"Yes," said her cousin, absently, "one does see such faces sometimes."

"I am sure," she went on, "there must be a story to that face. Edward, don't you believe that when people look like that, they have stories? I haven't a story, and I don't look like that; you haven't a story, and you don't look like that; don't tell me that people look like that for nothing."

"Like what, in the first place?" he asked, laughing. "And, in the second, did the face belong to a man or a woman? for you haven't told me even that yet. I dare say it's the man with the big red beard, whom one sees everywhere—you always go mad upon beards."

"It was a woman," said Harty, impetuously; "and the only thing in the world she was like, was an ecstatic triumphant Virgin, in an Assumption by some glorious old master. She was just two rows behind me, and when I first caught sight of her, she was leaning back with her hands clasped in her lap, her face was turned upwards towards the orchestra, and had a rapturous transfigured aspect, such as I never saw on any human face before. And oh, what eyes! It was not only the beauty of them, but a look they had in them, as if all the time they saw something that we none of us could see. It

seemed as if only the husk of her were sitting there, and that her soul was away, away, away, bathed in the light of a paradise that was invisible to our grosser sense."

"Some Southern woman, probably," said Edward. "One sees rays of light stream from those dark faces sometimes in a marvellous way."

"No, she wasn't Italian," interrupted Harty, eagerly; "she was not dark, she was a fair woman, with heaps of light hair, and a face as white as marble." (Edward Saville's heart gave a great jump.) "And what was so wonderful about her, was her extraordinary unconsciousness; it seemed to isolate her so completely from the whole room. She had no one with her—wasn't it odd for so young a woman? She can't be more than three or four-and-twenty; she passed out close before me, and I saw that she was alone—you'll think I am gone quite crazy on the subject, but her dress, too, was so very peculiar: she had got on a gown of—"

"Violet velvet, I know, and a diamond comb!" exclaimed Edward Saville, starting up in a state of great excitement. "My dear Harty, can you tell me anything about that woman?" he said, taking both her hands. "You say that you left the concert-room together; did you see her drive off? Did you hear what direction was given to the coachman?"

"No," said his cousin, in amazement at the degree of agitation he expressed. "Her carriage was just before mine; there was an elderly-looking man waiting for her at the door, and 'Home' was the only direction given."

Mrs. Brande knew the riddle now, and Medusa was revealed. She was troubled for her cousin; he looked worn and haggard, and his manner was so disturbed, that she felt quite unhappy about him. She moved heaven and earth to get him to promise to go down with her the next day into the country, but was obliged to leave town without him, and, what was worse, with but little apparent prospect of seeing him for some time to come.

The months passed; winter had rolled into spring, and Edward Saville was still in London. Harty wrote to him continually from Herne Court, loading him with little commissions to execute for her, that he might be obliged to write, and that so she might be kept a little au courant of his life. She did not gather much information, however, on this head; he did what she asked, but was silent about himself; the letters were short, unsatisfactory, and read sadly; at least, so it seemed to Mrs. Brande's kind heart.

One morning he got a note from her containing a list of plants, which she begged he would be so good as to order for her from some nursery-grounds on the Bayswater-road. It was a lovely morning towards the middle of May; he got into a Hansom, and went off in search of the florist. There was a brougham waiting at the door, which moved a few paces on to let him draw up. He passed through the little shop and into the nursery-garden behind

the house. The master of the shop was busily engaged at some distance with two ladies, who were coming down the principal walk towards the shop. They were veiled, but a strange throbbing seized Edward Saville's heart as they came nearer, and he saw that the one next to him wore a checked shawl and common stuff gown. The other was a lady dressed in black silk, and held a large nosegay of lilies of the valley in her hand. He stood aside breathless as they approached. It was she; he took off his hat as she passed; she looked full at him as she went by, and smiled, but did not return his bow, nor look back once. They got into the carriage and drove away. Without thinking of Harty, or her commission, or of the gaping shopman who was re-entering the house, and whom he nearly overthrew in his mad haste, Mr. Saville precipitated himself into his cab, and desired the man to follow the brougham, which was still in sight, but on ahead at some little distance before them. They drove on for some time upon the Bayswater-road, keeping the carriage steadily in sight all the while, until they saw it stop very nearly opposite the last gate of Kensington Gardens, before a long, low, Gothic cottage that stood within walls and a little way back from the high road. Here Edward Saville saw the young woman whom he supposed to be a servant get out and ring the bell. The door was opened by an elderly man, whom he recognised as the one he had seen at the Hall. The carriage drove off empty, and the two women disappeared into the house.

He discharged his cab, and then walked leisurely past the cottage. It looked astonishingly rural among all the other suburban residences. Home Cottage was the name of the spruce little white box with the bright green blinds just before it. It appeared to have a large garden at the back, for over the wall he could see a considerable space untenanted with houses, and in which there were three or four trees; real trees of respectable magnitude. The cottage was of a dark stone colour; there was clear blue in the heavens, soft white clouds were sailing about, a fresh spring wind tempered the mid-day heat, and a lithe young cherry-tree, covered with blossoms, was nodding its white head in at the latticed bedroom windows in front; it was a very pretty picture. Having made this inspection of the premises, he turned back again and rang at the bell.

"Pray can you tell me if Mrs. Brande lives here?" he said, when the old man appeared.

"There is no such person here," was the reply, very crustily given, and with a strongly-marked German accent.

"Do you know, by any chance, if there is such a person in the neighbourhood?" pursued Edward, as he saw the door gradually closing against him.

"There is no such person," said the old man again, and shut the door in his face.

He crossed the road and turned into Kensington Gardens. The great walk, which is

generally the favourite resort of nursemaids and their small charges, was nearly empty, and he wandered on in almost complete solitude among the trees until he came to the round pond. In the retirement of that lovely place he tried to collect his thoughts and calm the agitation of his mind. At last he had found her! He had no project, no plan, and he hardly felt any desire to make one. He knew where she lived; she could escape him no more. *He had found her!* All the harassing anxiety of the last weary months seemed to roll away in one long deep sigh of relief. It was enough, and he sat down to enjoy the new, divine sense of rest in which his heart was steeped.

Edward Saville passed once more before the cottage on his way back to the nursery-garden; no one was to be seen, but he heard the sound of a pianoforte, which was being played upon in a masterly manner. After executing Mrs. Brande's commission, he asked the shopkeeper who the ladies were whom he had seen there in the morning.

"Well, sir," said the man, "they're foreign ladies; they come down a'most every morning between twelve and one o'clock, and buy as many lilies of the valley as I can cut for them. I have sent flowers down to the house once or twice; they live at Home Cottage; it's a long low house, sir, a good bit further down the road."

This he knew. "Did you say they were foreign?" he inquired.

"Yes, sir; I've got the name down in my book." The man opened his book and pointed to a direction that was written in it. Mr. Saville read: "Mrs. Hausmann, Home Cottage, Bayswater-road."

The next morning, by twelve o'clock, he was at the garden, and made the gardener cut him all the lilies of the valley that were out. He had made up his mind to leave them at the cottage anonymously, and trust to the feminine instinct of the pale lady to guess from whom they came. He had just paid for the flowers, when he saw the two well-known figures arrive. They passed through the shop, and went up the broad pathway to speak to the gardener: Mr. Saville was in a side-walk, and watched the conversation from a distance. He saw the man point to him and shake his head—they were evidently being told that there were no lilies for them this morning. He changed his mind at once, and decided that, instead of leaving the flowers at the house, he would offer them in person. He went into the shop and waited; the ladies took a little turn in the grounds, and then came back. They entered the shop, and he was just preparing to speak to them, when the pale lady, who was passing close to him, suddenly snatched the flowers out of his hand, and, without a word, made for the carriage, followed by her companion, who was in fits of laughter. Encouraged by this extraordinary freedom of manner in both the women, Edward proceeded at once towards the cottage. He had not gone a hundred paces before the old man-servant met and passed him on the road.

He hastened on and rung at the door; it was opened this time by a little maid-of-all-work.

"Is Madame Hausmann at home?" said he.

"No, she's out," answered the girl.

"But the other ladies, are they at home?"

"Yes, Miss Elizabeth came in about twenty minutes ago."

"Oh, that was Miss Elizabeth, was it? I have just met her with her maid at the nursery-garden; will you take in my card, and ask if she will be kind enough to receive me?"

"There ain't no maid but me, and you've made a mistake," said the girl, "and it's no use my taking in the card, they never sees any one."

"But there were two ladies; if one was Miss Elizabeth, who was the other one?" said Edward. "Don't be in such a hurry, my dear," he continued, as he saw the door, which she held in her hand, preparing to close upon him as before, "you shan't lose by doing me a good turn." And he gave her half-a-crown.

"Well, there was only Miss Elizabeth and Countess Vander, but it's no use your asking to see them; I've been here near upon two years now, and never let any one in yet: two or three is come like you, but they never got in; I tell you, they sees no one."

"Jane!" cried an angry voice from above, "who are you gossiping with all this time? Shut the door this minute, and go back to your work!"

She slammed the door to, and Edward Saville turned away. Madame Hausmann, Miss Elizabeth, and Countess Vander, what an odd hash it all was! He was so deep in his brown study, that he did not see where he was going, and ran right up against a handsome man with a fair beard who was coming along at a swinging pace in the opposite direction. By an unerring instinct of the heart, Edward Saville knew that he was going to the cottage, and turned to look after him. He was right enough; but the stranger was more fortunate than he, for, without asking a single question, when Jane opened the door the young man entered the house.

Edward retraced his steps, and, as he walked slowly before the cottage, he could hear the man's voice and sounds of laughter from within. He went past, and looking up at the spruce villa that was next door (Europa Point it was called), he saw "To Let" in the windows of the first floor. He immediately asked to see the mistress of the house, inquired about terms, and was so liberal, and made himself so accommodating, that he not only settled everything then and there, but, by dint of a sovereign or two more judiciously thrown in, persuaded the landlady to allow him to instal himself in the mansion, which he had taken for three months certain, that very evening.

He arrived about eight o'clock, having given out to all his friends, and at his club, that he was going to leave town. Just as he had jumped out of the cab, and was paying the man, he glanced up at the next cottage. One of the top windows was open, and he saw the young companion of the pale lady looking steadily

down at him. Their eyes met; she coloured, and he saw that she had recognised him; she called to some one in the room, and a stern, sad-visaged old woman came to the window. About half an hour afterwards, his nosegay of lilies of the valley was returned to him.

The evening was oppressively hot, and Edward Saville was in a fever; his little stuffy lodging with its dingy drab moreen curtains, saturated with dust and smoke, seemed to stifle him. The front room was a tolerably pleasant apartment, of fair size; but the back drawing-room, which was about a quarter as large, entirely overlooked the neighbouring garden, and of course it was here that he took up his residence. He threw open the narrow windows as wide as they would go, and looked out. It was ten o'clock then, and a lovely moonlight night. From the next house he could hear the sound of music; the exquisite slow movement of Chopin's second sonata in B minor was wafted over the wall to him, and the young man, melted by the soft air, and by the tenderness of the music, and by the tenderness in his own soul, leaned his arms upon the window, and listened with his eyes full of tears.

Suddenly a loud slam, as if the piano had been violently shut down, broke the silence, the door of the drawing-room, which gave upon the garden, was thrown wide open, and out rushed the pale lady with a sheet of music in her hand, followed by the man he had knocked up against in the morning. She flew round and round the garden in the moonlight, dodging in and out among the trees and bushes with the young man in full chase after her, while their peals of laughter echoed through the still air. Edward Saville stood motionless watching them, glued to the window, and devoured by jealousy. At last the young man doubled adroitly round one of the bushes, and caught her full in his arms. They had a sharp struggle for the music, during which her comb tumbled out and all her hair came down, covering her to her very feet: she was beaten at last, and he got the music.

"Ach lieber Wilhelm," she sighed, "Ich bin so müde, lass mich ruhen!"*

Close by them was a bench, under one of the large trees on the lawn. They both sat down. Presently she fell asleep. How lovely she looked lying there cradled in his arms! The moonlight touched her pale face and the rose in her bosom, and fell upon the clouds of her fair hair, while little dark tremulous shadows of leaves, thrown by a swaying branch, flickered here and there across her white dress. Once or twice he softly moved back her hair from off her face, and once Edward saw him stoop his head and kiss her forehead.

"Come in! come in!" cried a harsh woman's voice from the house; "you'll catch your deaths of cold!"

She did not wake, and he carried her, all sleeping as she was, like a baby into the house.

* "Ah, dear William," she sighed, "I am so tired! Let me rest."

Soon after, Edward heard the front door shut, and saw the young man walk down the road, humming a contented little tune to himself.

LEATHER GUNS.

WE have been thickening the plates on the sides of our iron-clads only to find that there is no iron-side so stout that a shot cannot be made to crash through it. One well-planted shot from a six-hundred pounder would make an end of our iron Warrior. So the age of iron in ship-building seems to be already on the wane, and the builders of ships of war not meant as stationary harbour defences, begin to think of giving up the vain contest of weight between ships' sides and guns, and to suspect that they had better cultivate lightness and manageableness, with the utmost speed. As knights of the middle ages threw off the plating with which they endeavoured in vain to protect their flesh and blood against an improved artillery, and resolved to fight unencumbered, save with perhaps a helmet or a breastplate, so the iron ships of our own day are beginning to content themselves with a moderate breastplate above water-mark, and somebody has started the notion that even here paper will give better defence than steel. M. Szerelmy declares that paper may be made into boards far less penetrable than the hardest oak, and cotton is threatening to come into its promised honours as of sixfold greater force than gunpowder. It will take, says Mr. Scott Russell in the Quarterly Journal of Science, twenty-four ounces of gunpowder to break, in mining, a mass of rock that can be broken by four ounces of gun-cotton. But the glory of gun-cotton has hitherto been confined to its achievements as a burster. For the moderated service of propelling a shot, it has been tamed but lately by Major-General Lenk, of the Austrian service, who has produced it in a safe form, not six, but three, times more powerful than gunpowder.

Thus used in war, the advantages of gun-cotton over gunpowder are said to be many. A third of the weight suffices; it does not foul the gun, but leaves only a slight dew of condensed steam; and it explodes without smoke. Thus, that the smoke of battle will become a tradition of the past, when gun-cotton shall have been generally adapted to the use of armies. The smoke of gunpowder not only obscures sight, but it is a compound of noxious fumes that make their effects felt in casemates of fortresses, or between decks of ships. To get rid of the smoke and of the excessive heat of quick firing in such situations, is to double the force of the fighting men by doubling their power of standing unexhausted by their guns. You must keep your powder dry, but you may wet your gun-cotton; for when dried it is undamaged. Major-General Lenk has perfected the mechanism for producing gun-cotton in several forms. The simple form is that of a continuous straight

yarn of given weight to the yard, sold on reels. Used as match-line, this burns only at the rate of six inches a second. Its next form, yielding a swifter match-line, is produced by plaiting the yarn in a hollow cord; although this twist has increased the length of yarn, fire runs much faster along it, namely, at the rate, not of six inches, but of six feet in a second. A yet swifter match-line is made of that plaited cord by casing it in a skin of india-rubber cloth. This carries fire at the rate of twenty or thirty feet in the second. Gun-cotton used in artillery must, General Lenk found, not be pressed close, but have room given to it. Squeeze it into a dense mass, and it has violent blasting power; give it room, and it works gently. Imprison it, and it will burst iron bonds asunder with tremendous violence; leave it free, and when lighted it burns gently like a cheerful piece of firework.

And what next? When we fire cotton at ships and forts protected with paper, shall we ever go back to those leather guns, once famous, which have so curiously and completely passed out of common recollection? Their inventor has now been dead, buried, and forgotten, for two hundred and thirty years. The tribe of biographical compilers have not devoted a line to his memory in their bulky dictionaries; and the historians of the science of gunnery, who discourse so largely on the catapult, the balista, the ribandequin, the mangonel, and other obsolete "messengers of bad news," have omitted to notice the curious invention which brought him fortune and contemporaneous fame—most probably for the simple reason that they knew nothing about it. A few documents in Her Majesty's State Paper Office, and a monument in a London church, are the only remaining memorials of Colonel Robert Scott, the inventor of the once famous leathern artillery.

This Robert Scott was born in the latter half of the sixteenth century. He came of a good old stock, being descended from the ancient barons of Bawerie, in Scotland. He applied himself assiduously to study, and extended his knowledge by visiting foreign countries. To military science he paid special attention, and soon perceived that it was open to great improvements, as it is unto this day. The field-pieces of that age were machines of iron or brass, immensely cumbersome, and almost unmanageable. The problem to be solved was, how to render a gun more portable without lessening its projectile force. After full consideration of the matter, he came to the conclusion that there was "nothing like leather." Of hardened leather, therefore, he constructed guns. The correctness of his idea was tested by experiment, and the result was considered to show the immeasurable superiority of leather over brass and iron.

Why he did not lay his invention at the feet of his own liege sovereign it is needless to inquire. Perhaps he did so, and was snubbed for his pains: as other inventors have been since his time. At all events, he raised a company of two hundred men, and went over to Sweden, where he was welcomed by Gustavus Adolphus, who,

seeing his ability and the value of his discovery, forthwith took him into his service, and at the end of two years rewarded him with the office of Quartermaster-General of the Army.

After five years' service under Gustavus he repaired to Denmark, where he was appointed General of the King's Artillery, but soon afterwards, yielding to the advice of friends, he returned to England, and tendered his services to his own sovereign, King Charles the First. This step, which was taken in sixteen hundred and twenty-nine, turned out a very profitable one for the colonel. He was received with open arms by Charles, who appointed him one of the gentlemen of his privy chamber, granted him an annual pension of six hundred pounds out of the Court of Wards, and purchased for him a house in Lambeth at a cost of fourteen hundred pounds. Colonel Scott, however, did not live long to enjoy these tokens of the royal favour, for, dying in sixteen hundred and thirty-one, he was buried in Lambeth Church, where a sumptuous monument, still to be seen, was erected to his memory by his loving wife Anne, whom he had married in France. The sculptor has represented the colonel as an armour-clad fierce-looking man, wearing a heavy moustache and a pointed beard.

In the very year of the colonel's death, Gustavus Adolphus had ample proof of the effectiveness and utility of the leathern artillery, at the memorable battle of Leipzig. The guns were found to be so easily portable, that a small battery could easily be removed from one part of the field to another, or a new battery made in the space of ten minutes; and when a fresh attack was about to be made on the part of the enemy, a battery was immediately at hand to repel it. In fact, it was in great measure owing to the invention of Colonel Scott that the Swedish king obtained so glorious a victory, and the imperial General Tilly himself was constrained to admit that the portable cannon performed wonders. How it came about that the leathern ordnance was shortly afterwards laid aside as worthless, is difficult to explain or even to conjecture, but it is not recorded to have made any subsequent appearance on the battle-field, though a leathern cannon was fired in Edinburgh so late as the year seventeen hundred and eighty-eight, probably out of curiosity.

A RUSSIAN ROMANCE.

I HAD my hand on Dr. Tillmann's door, and yet I hesitated to knock. I was house-surgeon of the great Petro-Paulovsky Hospital at St. Petersburg, of which that testy and punctilious old German was principal physician, and I carried with me my daily report of the cholera patients who had died during the night.

A moment ago I had been talking briskly enough to a group of students, and now I was standing like a timid boy at a schoolmaster's door. The fact was, I knew the old automaton was jealous of me, and disliked me, and I de-

tested him, and I tried as much as possible to avoid coming into contact with him. I had determined to resist and resent any indignity offered me, and yet I wished to avoid a quarrel, because I loved his dear pretty little daughter Olga. I was, moreover, on the morning of which I speak, tired out both in mind and body; for I had been up the greater part of the night attending patients in a state of collapse from the terrible epidemic which was devastating the Russian capital. On my way to my own room to snatch an hour or two of sleep, I had stopped at Dr. Tillmann's door to deliver my official report. At that moment I would rather have been digging graves, tired as I was, than have confronted that intolerable old martinet, whom nothing could propitiate, and from whom no exertion of mine could extort a word of praise.

At last, I knocked in a quick business-like way. There was a muttering, but no one answered. I knocked again. "Come in!" snapped out the doctor, in his dry mechanical voice, I entered. There he sat, as he had sat every morning for seven-and-twenty years at the same hour, the great brass tower of a samovar boiling before him, and the teapot mounted above the burning charcoal on the little brazier stand. Before him lay the *Journal de St. Petersburg*, which he, a little nankeen-coloured man in the blue official coat and brass buttons, was conning with a contemptuous air. Opposite sat Olga at the open window, for it was April time, teasing and feeding an old green and crimson parrot. It was a scene just such as De Hooze loved to paint. The sunshine fell in blanch light on one side of the snowy tablecloth, and in slant golden squares upon the marqueterie of the floor. I bowed to her and to the implacable doctor.

"Well, sir," said he, "your report."

I was about to hand it, when he said: "Read it."

I read it. "April 14, 1832. Number of patients received since yesterday: In the Peter ward, eighty-three; in the Catherine ward, seventy-five; in the Romanoff ward, ninety-two. Died during the night, forty-three."

"Oh, father, father, how terrible," cried the doctor's daughter; "Heaven has, indeed, sent the destroying angel among us. Do the poor people suffer much, Mr. Campbell? Oh, can I be of any use? Do you think if I went to the wards I could encourage the nurses?"

Even I had never before seen Olga look so beautiful as she did then, when a high and generous impulse was stirring her heart to good.

"Miss Tillmann," I replied, "you must not expose yourself to danger. The nurses are zealous. They understand the people, and can bear these scenes of horror better than you could."

"Olga, attend to your parrot," said the old pedant, harshly; "practise your music; your master comes at eleven."

"I am afraid, sir," I said, "the opium and calomel treatment does not save more than a third of our patients. Those who have been

brought in this morning have been nearly all in a state of collapse, from which it has been, in most cases, impossible to recover them."

"A mere phase of the disease," said Dr. Tillmann; "that will soon pass away. Continue the opium and the calomel. We must have no absurd innovations in the Petro-Paulovsky Hospital. By-the-by," said he (a mischievous malice twinkling in his little beady eyes), "here is a letter in the *Journal* to-day puffing up some new Persian anti-cholera drug—the Sumbul, or jumble, or some such absurd name: a musk-root, that brings the dead to life, according to an Englishman's account. I really think these foreign quacks are getting more impudent than ever." (Here he suddenly twisted round in his chair, and fixed his weasel eyes on me.) "Mr. Campbell, did you insert that letter?"

The blood rose to my face, and my cheek was turning red, as I replied, indignantly:

"No, sir, I did not insert that letter; nor will I endure, even from you, the name of foreign quack."

I am sure the angry tone in which I replied must have given pain to Miss Tillmann, for she bent down to the parrot, and I could see the colour rise to her cheek.

Nothing could move the doctor. "O, I only asked," he said. "No offence; but I know young men take up these new-fangled fancies. The third house-surgeon before you was mad about mesmerism, and was angry with me for ridiculing it. We had high words; a word of mine to the government, and his name was struck off the staff. Take a seat while I go into the next room and put on my other coat. I will then go round the wards with you."

All this time the insolent old disciplinarian had kept me standing, as if I had been a servant.

I bowed, and took a seat. I was too proud to plead fatigue and so escape the odious duty imposed upon me by this narrow-minded fossil of a bygone régime. I had not dared to tell him that the letter he had questioned me about, though not inserted by me, was really my composition, and had probably been sent to the *Journal* by some imprudent and officious friend. It recorded some convincing proofs of the efficacy of the mysterious Persian musk-root.

As the inner door closed on the doctor, Olga's pale anxious face turned round towards me with a half-sorrowful recognition that she had not dared hitherto to accord me. I advanced towards her and raised her hand to my lips.

"Dear Mr. Campbell," she said, "I thank you from my heart for bearing with my father's harsh caprices. I know how hard it is for your high spirit to endure these indignities. I hear there is danger; do tell me if it is true. I know you would not tell my father."

"Olga," I said, "this pestilence is not the worst danger we have to encounter. We hear this morning from the carters who bring the sick, that there is a belief spreading among the peasants that we are poisoning the patients, and that they threaten to attack the hospital. On my own responsibility I have written to the

citadel to ask for a guard of soldiers. Olga, if danger comes——”

“Hush, Andrew,” cried Olga, “here is my father!” And she turned to talk to the parrot.

In the evening of the same day, entering the room occupied by the students, I was hailed with a cheer as I arrived, and the porter of the hospital, Alexis, a good-natured thickset fellow, with an enormous hydrocephalic skull, ran to place me a seat in the centre of the assembly. The students gathered round me. The scapegrace of the hospital, Ivan Pellican, was addressing the rest. It was he, I was sure, who had been rash enough to send that letter about the new drug to the *Journal de St. Petersburg*.

I advanced and seized him laughingly by the arm. “Why, you rascal,” said I, “it was you, then, who sent that letter to the *Journal*. It’ll be my ruin!”

Ivan, not the least disturbed, went on with a bantering speech about me and the new remedy. He was a little bright-eyed man, with pearl-buttoned gaiters and a white paletot.

At the end of Pellican’s burlesque, the drug, resembling a greenish root bruised together, was passed round among the students. Every one pinched a bit off and tasted it.

The noise of the door opening startled us. We looked round; it was Dr. Tillmann.

“So this is how my students spend their time,” said the stern old man, “plotting mutiny, and proposing schemes that subvert all discipline. Away with this trumpery weed. Mr. Campbell, after your denial of this morning, I am surprised at your want of ingenuousness. There, no outburst! I am accustomed to the violent self-assertions of youth.”

The doctor swept out of the room and slammed the door.

Next day the symptoms of effervescence among the serfs became alarming. Several cholera carts were stopped on their way to the hospital, the patients were taken out, the vehicles were broken up and thrown into the Fontanka canal, and the horses turned loose. In the great hay-market outside the hospital, immense crowds assembled, shouting at the great entrance: “Let us kill these murderers, the doctors!” The hay and wood sellers transacted no business, the quass and beer stalls were unfrequented, even the tea stalls had, I observed, but few customers. None of the richer classes were seen; the people gathered into dangerous whispering knots. That these groups were talking about the hospital there could be no doubt, for every third speaker had his hand stretched out and pointing at it.

Once, and once only, as we passed one of the large windows in the first ward, I could not help directing Dr. Tillmann’s attention to these ominous symptoms; but all the answer the doctor would deign to give was:

“Our peasants are stupid pigs, but they will not dare to lift a finger against the Petro-Paulovsky Hospital. No! They would as soon set fire to the cathedral. What comes suddenly, goes suddenly. This fire will soon burn

itself out.” He would not discuss the matter with me, and we went round the beds with the students.

Having an hour or so to myself before the night patients arrived, and there being now no signs of any more dangerous concourse in the hay-market, I stole to my own quiet room at the left wing of the hospital, near the anatomical museum, to complete my chemical experiments on the musk-root, before communicating my discovery to the chief physicians in London and Paris.

It was a beautiful April evening; the full moon shining through my window upon my retort, and my glass phials, and scales, gave the room the look of an alchemist’s chamber, for its beams fell in squares, and lines, and wavering glimmers, on my open books, and my saucers of tests and acids. The white wall of the hospital garden below, gleamed as if it were solid silver. I was absorbed in the ardour of discovery. I treated a part of the membrane of the root with sulphuric acid, and it turned an intense purple. I was more and more certain now that my discovery was one of importance to the scientific world—one that would bring me fame and fortune. But how was I, an unknown man, kept in obscurity by a jealous superior, to make the discovery public? My proofs would have no weight in the eyes of prejudiced men disliking a novelty which superseded the old remedies of their youth. I was not enthusiastic enough to believe I had found a panacea, but I was sure that I had found a reliable aid to the cholera doctor.

Pellican burst into the room with something in a teacup.

“Hurrah, Campbell!” he cried; “I’ve distilled the stuff as you wished me, and here it is. Reinsch and I have been at it ever since the last case of collapse was put into his bath.”

In rushed Reinsch (an enthusiastic flaxen-haired German) in raptures. He had treated his solution with lime and muriate of soda, and the result had been a sediment consisting of gum, starch, and saline matter. In a moment we were seated, our three heads together, examining the precipitate with the true ardour of philanthropic discoverers.

We all liked Reinsch, who was one of those quiet amiable dreamers, too negative in quality for any one to dislike. But Pellican was my great crony. He was a native of Little Russia, an impulsive warm-hearted fellow, as eager at study as at pleasure, our best surgeon, our best billiard-player. One moment you found him absorbed in the laboratory, and next moment you would find him shouting and singing among a party of card-players, and looming out of clouds of circling smoke.

We were well into our work, when, to my infinite chagrin, the door flew open, and in burst eight or ten medical students. They were Hungarians, Danes, Prussians, Armenians—noisy reckless good-natured fellows—in many varieties of costume. One of them, who had, perhaps, taken a little too much wine (in

his laudable anxiety to escape infection), was playing on a concertina a fanciful selection of airs from the repertoire of the solitary Russian composer, Glinka.

"Here they are, grubbing away as usual!" cried Kalthofer, a Livonian.

"They'll kill themselves!" cried a young Prussian, "I know they will. Come, Pellican, make a second table at whist; here's Maslovitch and Hoffman been cleaning us all out."

Up leaped Pellican, all his good resolutions forgotten in a moment. He drew a pack of cards from his pocket, flapped them with a practised hand, threw them in an arch over his head, and caught them as cleverly as a clever juggler.

"Not quite so much noise, old fellows," said I; "remember, this is a terrible time, and we have our hands full. Besides, I have an hour's writing to do before I go round the wards. Come, troop!" And I rose from my seat with the gestures of a drover collecting his flock.

I was driving them out at the door, when two fresh students arrived, leading Alexis between them; he was pale, his coat was torn, he had a black eye, and his mouth was bleeding.

"Hallo, young Hydrocephalus," said Pellican, "what's this? Look at him."

"Tell them all about it, Alexis," said his conductors, thumping him on the back.

"They call me a spy," groaned Alexis.

"Who did?" said I.

"Who? why the black people in the market-place. They took away the cholera cart from me, carried off the sick men, and would have thrown me into the canal, if one of them, a coachman, hadn't said, kindly, 'Let the beast go; he sold his head to the poisoning doctors years ago, and they'll only thank us for killing him.'"

"And so we should," cried Pellican, laughing unfeelingly till he grew quite red. "Come along, Alexis, and have a schnapps, and tell us the whole story! Mr. Campbell, here, is busy. Come along, mes gargons; I say you must. I've got some news for you. Look at Campbell!"

The students already in the passage buddled back into the doorway, their faces looming through blue rings of smoke.

"Campbell's in love!"

"In love?" they all broke out, like the Greek chorus.

"Yes; in love—in love with old Tillmann's daughter—but he has no chance. She smiles at me whenever I meet her."

I rushed at my tormentor in a pretended rage, there was a shout of laughter, and the door closed on Pellican and his roystering friends.

An hour afterwards I entered Dr. Tillmann's room. Olga was not there, but there was her book with a flower in it to mark the place. The doctor was at his desk, the paper on which was strongly illuminated by the yellow light thrown upon it by the glow of an Argand lamp, over the glass of which was placed a circular green shade. Half in light and half in shadow, just beyond the lamp, stood three glass jars containing specimens of enormous tarantulas and centipedes.

The doctor looked up as I entered, and in the coldest manner possible acknowledged my presence.

I mentioned the report of Alexis, and the possibility of the hospital being attacked during the night. I requested to be allowed to send to the citadel for a company of the Preobrazhensky regiment.

"How long, sir, am I to be troubled with these absurd fears?" demanded the doctor, suddenly. "Is it not enough that you deceive me, mock me, encourage your fellow-students to mutiny and insubordination? No, sir, I will have no soldiers to guard the Petro-Paulovsky Hospital. I have seen too much of our peasantry to fear them."

"You do me a great injustice, Dr. Tillmann," I replied, "and but for one reason that I have, I would not remain another day under your direction."

The doctor's eyes turned red as he took up one of the glass jars and shook it before me. "There is no reptile here," he said, "so full of poison as thou art. Do you think I have not discovered that you have dared to administer to the patients of the emperor's hospital, your infamous drug? No wonder the ignorant peasantry accuse us of poisoning the sick. I understand, sir, also, your insolent allusion to my daughter; but be sure, sir, she shall never become the wife of a beggarly adventurer. You see this letter" (here he pointed to a letter on the table); "it contains an order for your instant dismissal from the staff of this hospital. No words, sir. Good night. We shall see to-morrow who is master in this place."

I bowed and retired. I was paralysed by Dr. Tillmann's threats. A cruel hand seemed snatching me from Olga, and hurling me into an abyss of obscurity, penury, and despair. When I was on the verge, too, of fame, happiness, and a great discovery!

Still I was young and persevering. I might still set myself right with the minister, obtain some fresh appointment, become rich and famous, and win Olga. One thing I determined. I would send (on my own responsibility) for soldiers, so imminent seemed to me the danger in which we stood at the hospital. I wrote a hasty note to General Mouravieff, then in command of the citadel, sent it by Alexis, and turned in for the night.

My room was at so great a distance from the entrance, and was approached by so many long barrack-like passages, that no groans of the populace could reach me there, no shuffling sound of feet as the bearers bore the bodies to the dead-house disturbed me. I ordered the main entrance of the building to be strictly barred, before I went to my room. It was now ten o'clock. I blew out the candle, and, without undressing, threw myself on my bed, and fell fast asleep.

I suppose I had slept three hours, when a roaring noise from the market-place awoke me. I sat up and listened. It was a deep surging sound, such as you may hear arise from the sea when a storm is growing. It was interrupted every

now and then by a burst of shouts and an occasional scream.

Pellican rushed into my room, followed by Maslovitch and a young English student.

"Quick, quick, Campbell. The peasants are attacking the doors, and threatening to kill every poisoning doctor they find."

"Pellican, go out the back way and try and bring some soldiers. Go to the main guard at the Winter Palace. I am afraid Alexis has turned traitor."

"No, Campbell," replied Pellican. "I don't go while there is danger. I stop with you. But come, we must keep the door against these madmen. Maslovitch, run through the wards and rouse all the fellows."

Pellican and I hurried to the great entrance, against which some forty axes could be now heard ringing. We had not got down more than the first corridor of the enormous building, when a tremendous splintering crash, and a howl as of so many wolves, told us part of the door had fallen. Every moment the roar of voices grew louder. We had reached the last passage leading to the great hall, when a figure in white ran to me from a side-room and threw herself at my feet. It was Olga.

"Save my father, save my father, Mr. Campbell! They are murdering him. He tore himself from me, and has gone among them."

I kissed her forehead, and placing her in the arms of one of the nurses, ran with Pellican down the long flight of steps that led into the hall.

There were forty or fifty great bearded peasants standing beside the half-broken door, swinging their axes and shouting, as they faced an old porter and Dr. Tillmann with drawn swords.

"Beasts, slaves, pigs!" cried the infuriated old doukey; "advance one step further to defile the hospital the emperor founded, and you die. Back, you hogs!"

As he spoke, he advanced and struck at the leading insurgents. The leaders fell back before the feeble blows of his sword, but a rough butcher's man behind, his hands still red from the slaughter-house, struck him down over their heads with a crashing blow from a pole-axe. By this time I and Pellican were surrounded by some twenty or thirty students, porters, and assistants, all armed with bludgeons and sword-sticks. We bore down to the rescue, and driving the poor wretches back over the door, cleared the hall in a minute. We instantly carried off the body of the wounded doctor into the museum, which opened to the left of the hall; and as the chief entrance to the main wards and to the doctor's apartments lay through that room, we agreed to make that place our citadel: barricading the door with chairs, forms, stools, and desks.

Fortunately, our assailants, being chiefly bent on our murder, contented themselves for the present with attacking this entrance, and did not proceed, as they might have done, to sack the hospital, and carry off the patients. Every minute's respite we obtained, gave us hope of the arrival of the soldiers. It was a dark night, but by the light of the torches that some of the

peasants carried, we could see the seething mass of greasy black-bearded faces rolling and billowing under the windows.

Our scheme of defence was soon carried out. The doctor, who had received a dangerous wound, was placed on a bed in a side-room under the care of Maslovitch, who was not of a combative nature. When I went to see him and prescribe remedies, I found Olga already at his side. She gave me a look of unspeakable gratitude, and held her hand out for me to kiss.

"Are we in danger?" she asked, in a low voice.

"We are in some danger, Olga, but Heaven will protect us—pray for us!"

When I returned, I found that Pellican had arranged his force with great strategic skill up in the two iron galleries on either side of the barricaded door of the museum. We resolved to defend the door by showering jars of spirits and the heavy bones of skeletons upon every assailant that dared show his face over the threshold. Alas! for poor Dr. Tillmann's specimens—the pride of his life, the treasures amassed during long years of patient collecting—down they were to go, splintering missiles to check the fury of an enraged mob.

"Not a man must throw a bottle till I give the signal," cried Pellican from the second balcony, waving a huge glass jar. "When I cry *Anafema!* Harusch throws, then the rest in turns. We must be cool, or we shall be all dead men before the morning. All I wish is, that every glass was full of vitriol: then we'd mark the rascals. Never mind what wounds you inflict, for if we can only keep a whole skin till the soldiers come, the fellows will return to us to be cured. Now, to your posts, for they are coming on, with a vengeance! Look out, Campbell; mind, we begin with the lower shelves. They are dried up, and not of much use. Now then, and God help us!"

There came a rush against the barricade, a crash of axes, and with shouts of "Give us up our children," "Give us up our brothers," "Tear the poisoners to pieces!" the crowd hewed down the door and rushed in, clambering over the shattered defences.

Four or five of the more daring broke in pell-mell, and, astonished to see no enemy drawn up to receive them, they paused for an instant to wait for their companions.

Pellican gave the word, and down came a shower of glass jars, thigh-bones, pestles and mortars, and other extraordinary missiles. Two of the peasants fell stunned; the others, bleeding and frightened, scrambled back into the hall.

Three times the assault was resumed, and three times our splintering rain of horrible pickles drove the serfs back, staggering, amazed, and wounded.

"Never mind," they cried from the hall; "wait till the morning, then we will kill every doctor in the hospital, and throw you all into the canal!"

The fourth assault was more furious than the three previous attacks. Reinforced by hundreds

of maddened greasy beards, the peasants crowded in in a solid phalanx, and, braving all our missiles, threatened to storm the staircase leading to the gallery in spite of all we could do. But at that moment a discharge of musketry was heard, and a mere handful of soldiers, pouring in a volley at the mob, advanced through the hall with fixed bayonets, and were soon masters of the field. In five minutes more, there was not an insurgent in the building, and we had again barricaded the great entrance and placed a guard there. It was Alexis who had brought in the soldiers by a back-garden entrance of which the mob was ignorant.

"So far so good, Campbell," said Pellican, patting Alexis on the back. "Well done, old Hydrocephalus! But it will still go hard with us at daybreak if we do not get further help. This time I will go."

I remonstrated with the brave fellow, but all in vain. In a few minutes Pellican had put on the greasy leather caftan of Alexis, his huge, shapeless boots, and his lambswool cap, and given him his dress. He pressed my hand as I went with him to the garden door.

"Good-by, Campbell!" he said. "If I don't come back, be sure the dogs have got me; don't waste regrets on me; I am of no use to any one; only let my father know that I perished in trying to do some good. Adieu!" And he was lost in the darkness.

What a night that was! Spent partly with Olga watching the broken sleep of her father who was tossing in a fever of pain, partly in supplying the soldiers and students with refreshments, partly in reassuring the sick men in the ward, who expressed perfect reliance in our good faith, and who, as they died, died blessing us.

There was no further attack that night, but every now and then a threatening roar broke forth from our cruel besiegers. To-morrow, if no aid came, must bring death to us all. Oh! with what inconceivable agony I watched the hands of the clock from hour to hour, and still there came no tidings of Pellican, no sign of troops!

As the first curdling grey streaked the sky, I left the roof where I had been watching, and went to Olga. She was not asleep, but she was on her knees. I knelt beside her. "Dearest," I said, "our time on earth may be very short. These madmen will soon advance to the attack. Tell me that you love me."

She made no answer, but she placed her hand in mine, and we knelted hand in hand in that solemn betrothal. We could hear the gathering roar of the peasants below the window as they collected for the assault. I pressed a passionate kiss upon her lips, and ran to the hall to arrange our last defence.

Already the axes were ringing at our barricade, when a distant shout spread and widened till it ran through the vast multitude. The axes ceased their blows, the great mob rolled and heaved and divided, leaving a road through the centre of the market-place. There was a

flutter of red and yellow flags, a glitter of spear-heads in the first sunlight, and an open carriage drawn by four grey horses dashed to the door. It was the emperor, alone: the lancers, at his order, had retired into the outer street. He was in a plain military cloak, and wore a brass helmet, but no star or order. The barricades of hay waggons fell away as he approached. He prayed and crossed himself before the sacred picture at our door, then stood up in the carriage and addressed the people. He was so near that we could hear his words.

"My children," he said, in his imperial manner, "you are misled. These good men, these good doctors, venture their lives for your good. Not a finger shall be laid upon them. This pestilence is sent from Heaven to punish some of our national sins. Kneel down and pray to God to remove the scourge, and to forgive you!"

I shall never again behold such a sight. In a moment, the multitude, lately so fierce and so thirsting for blood, fell upon their knees, and every head was bowed. When they rose, they slunk away like so many criminals, and some fifty of them surrendered themselves without a murmur to the lancers, who came riding slowly among them. As I was still watching the extraordinary scene, Alexis pulled me by the arm, and up the steps rushed Pellican, and seized me by the hand.

"Hurrah, Campbell! Did not I manage it pretty well? I drove to the citadel when I left you last night, and, finding the old brute of a general would not believe my story, or send me any more troops, I took a carriage and three horses and rattled off to Sarskoi Seloi, where, by the best luck in the world, one of the chamberlains whom I knew brought me to the emperor, to whom the riot had already been telegraphed, and now he's coming to see the hospital. Get along and meet him. Hurrah, Campbell, we shall all make our fortunes!"

I went to receive the emperor, who was most gracious. He thanked us for our conduct during the siege, and then went through the wards. The only thing that puzzled him was Alexis, whom, in Pellican's dress, he took at first for one of the medical staff. Next day the minister wrote to me, by command of Nicholas, constituting me a coadjutor of Dr. Tillmann, who, however, sank from his injuries within the week, and died soon after; but not before he had joined mine and Olga's hands, and begged my forgiveness.

I married dear brave Olga; nor was I long chief physician to the Petro-Paulovsky Hospital, you may be sure, before I made Ivan Pellican the house-surgeon.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER XIII. THE FAMILY FERMENT.

AFTER Fernor had gone off the stage with such effect at Raglan-terrace, Violet fled away to her room. But when she came down again later, in the half-light—which, perhaps, she was waiting for—she found a silent and gloomy council sitting. The young girl, with sparkling eyes, looked from one to the other with a sort of triumph, as much as to say, "Is he not charming? And his generous declaration going out, all to clear John Hanbury!" But they said nothing, and her brother walked over to the window, and, drumming on the pane, looked out.

"Well," she said, a little embarrassed, "so he has gone after all! Such a curious thing as it has been altogether—his coming, and his being brought to our house."

"I wonder," said her brother, turning round suddenly, "how you mean this to end? It is all very well as an amusement, but this is a serious business, I can tell you. How do you mean to behave to John Hanbury?"

"To John Hanbury?"

"Yes, dear," said her sister, with a sort of "humouring," coaxing manner, "you know we must think of him. Louis is right, indeed, and I am not sorry we have got rid of our sick man."

"Sick man," said her brother, sorrowfully, "sick actor, if you like. He knows how to do the thing with effect. He is caught up with vanity. I saw what he was at the whole time."

Violet looked at them both wistfully. Her lip was trembling. "No, no," she said, "he was *really* ill; he *really* suffered. The doctor said so, and they all said so."

"That may be," said her brother. "But, my dear good child, it is time that we should try and grow sensible, and steady, and leave off our romances."

"Yes, dear," said Mrs. Manuel; "listen to Louis, who is always very sensible in all he says. You know it is for your good."

"Here you are fully committed to Hanbury, and as good and honest a fellow as you could pick out of the world. I have told him so. You have told him so yourself—at least, gave him to understand as much."

"No, indeed no," said the girl, eagerly; "he was to wait—to wait as long as I pleased; and I might change my mind, he said, so he would not hurry me. He is very good, and amiable, and I should not like to hurt his feelings, indeed I should not; but—"

"What!" said the brother, turning on her gravely. "Do you mean to tell us you *have* changed your mind, after leading this man on for nearly a year to believe you liked him, and giving him what amounts to a consent—and that you are going to go back, all for a childish whim of this sort! I couldn't believe it. Ah, Violet! I am astonished at you! You think a good and faithful heart can be picked up like any pebble on the roadside. If you throw it away, you have only to look for another."

The voice of Mrs. Manuel was now heard.

"Hush! Don't, now! Violet has been foolish, but she sees her foolishness. She is very young; she has much to learn. She will do better in future."

"Will she?" said the young man. "I don't think so. At this very moment she is thinking of that empty-headed conceited fellow that went off so theatrically. A vain English fop! I know the man thoroughly, and many more like him."

"No, no, Louis," said her mother, anxiously, "she never said so. She does not dream of it."

"Of course not," said her sister, gaily. "We are frightening the poor child with our lectures."

"I never said so," said Violet, a little piteously. "I am sure I respect and like him, and always did; only I don't want to be hurried on so dreadfully."

"No, of course not," said her mother; "why should you, darling? We were only alarmed about that captain, who is so full of himself."

"I'm sure she has too much sense," said her brother, "and I *knew* she had. I only wanted to be on the safe side. You see, it is no trifling matter, now, once a thing has gone so far. But we have got him safe out of the house. It was natural poor John should be alarmed. And I shall take good care we shan't have that languid mass of affection here again, doing his antics day and night."

Violet spoke with a forced calm: "But why do you fix that friend of yours on me? I have never sought him. It is you—it is he—that—has pursued me—"

"Never sought him!" said the youth. "No—not since you met this other man. But before then, how did you behave? Did you speak to him—walk with him? Did you ride his horses? Did you encourage him in a way that, even if you never spoke a single word, was intelligible?"

"Why do you speak to me in this way?" she said, rising up in growing excitement. "Let me go to my room," said Violet. "I have no one to help me—no one to pity me here—and—"

The anxious mother, more observant than the others, saw hysterical signs, and interposed.

"There! we shall say no more about it. Hush, dears! We shall not see him again for a long time, and be gradually rid of him. Go and lie down, dear; you look heated, and we will talk no more about it."

"But she must promise!" said her brother, who was as excited as she was. "She must promise before she goes."

Her face glowed, and she fell again into her supplicating manner. It was as though she were helpless among them all, and begging pity. "I can't. Indeed I can't!" she said. Then she suddenly burst out into floods of hysterical tears. "This is very cruel of you! What have I done? How can you go on so to me? But I am stronger and wiser than you think, even if you all join against me."

It was clear she was of an hysterical temperament. Her mother came over, in alarm, to soothe her. Violet sobbed upon the sofa. The sister and brother looked on from a distance, moodily, yet a little disturbed. Louis then broke out impatiently: "Such childishness! Such folly! It was Violet all over! He could not contain himself to see a brave noble honest fellow, who could make her happy, treated in this way." But this was all apologetic, for the discussion was virtually at an end, and she presently rose, and, with a start, fled away to her room. The others looked at each other with doubt and alarm. The mother, in a few moments, stole away softly after her; the son, however, paced backwards and forwards—as he had been doing for some time. She was the excitable one of the house, and had to be humoured and petted. Now they became overwhelmed with confusion, and looked at each other guiltily. The son was troubled: she was, in fact, loved by them all, and was their human toy. These chidings were all for "her own good;" so, at least, they always apologised to their own hearts; but when she showed signs of this sort of distress, she had them at her mercy, and did what she pleased.

In a few seconds her sister had flown up-stairs after her, had found her on the bed with her face pressed against a very wet pillow, and in an instant was kissing her almost with violence. The other did not push her away, but only sobbed bitterly.

"Hush, hush!" said Pauline, gently; "you are not to go on this way—you will get ill again. There, we won't worry you any more. We didn't

mean it, indeed we did not. We were only sorry for *him*, you know. But we won't talk of it."

The brother, a little repentant also, had stolen up, and was listening. Presently he was heard tapping. The younger girl was quite softened at these advances; she was even forward, in faintly owning that she was wrong, that she did not mean anything, and that she had headaches. In short, there were mutual concessions, and it was all "made up."

A few minutes later, Hanbury came in, joyous and rubbing his hands together. He was very happy. He knew that now the clouds had passed over. The sad impediment was now happily transported away. His own fame had been cleared, and he was almost boisterous.

All the family came down to him. Violet bathed her eyes, and, possibly a little ashamed of her late outburst, came with smiles, and even affected good humour. There was an effort in all the members of the family, as if they were anxious to get rid of the recollection—all, too, with this odd result, that Mr. Hanbury went away that night late, singing softly to himself in placid contentment, convinced that he never had been so firmly established in the affections of her he loved.

CHAPTER XIV. NEW ACQUAINTANCES.

WHEN Fermor had just done a very light breakfast, which he took in a sort of "gleaning" fashion, his man came in to say there was a gentleman below who wished to see him.

"Who is he, and what is his business?" said Fermor, with the polite haughtiness he always adopted towards servants.

"Doctor Carlay, sir, he calls himself, and I think he's from next door."

"I won't see him, I can't see him," said Fermor, pettishly, and dropping the autocrat manner of a sudden. "How I am persecuted!" His tone was as of one who could have wept over himself. "I want no doctors, I have one of my own; send him away, please."

"Please, sir, I don't think he's come about *that*—I think it's about the dog."

"What a persecution!" said Fermor, again about to weep over himself. "How can I help it? He's to be sent away. There, make him go. How I am worried!"

Three firm steady knocks were heard at the door, which was then opened gently, and a man's figure stood in the entrance. The servant went over to prevent his entrance, but he kept his hand on the handle of the door, and bowed.

He was a very singular-looking person, more than six feet high, and so hard in texture, rough in corners and projections, and generally impenetrable, that he suggested the idea of being cast-iron all over. He was stiff and unbending as that metal, and, where he had any hair, it was all roughened into a sort of grey wiry grizzle, that looked like deep rust upon the surface of the iron. The same rust also seemed to have spread generally over all his clothes.

Fermor looked at him with astonishment. But

he had no effect upon the servant, who was accustomed to strange characters; and he was described below stairs as "a queer customer."

"I have taken a liberty, a very great liberty, I am afraid," he said, in tones which were gentle—certainly gentlemanlike—and not what might be expected from a grim casting, "to break in on you without ceremony. It is only the necessity of the case that must excuse me. Your dog, last night——"

"O, I know," said Fermor, still pettishly; "he disturbed me, too, as well as you. I am sure it was no fault of mine. I could not divine it beforehand."

The other began to grow yet more grim, his words to get sharp and metallic in sound.

"I don't speak for myself. It would be very hard to wake me. And if I was wakened it would not make much matter. I must ask you to have the dog sent away; in fact, I must insist on it, without discussion."

There was a hard churlishness about the way this was put which was offensive. Fermor coloured, and hurriedly got into his most chilling outside coat.

"If you had waited," he said, "you would have heard that the dog *was* to be sent away this very day. There is no necessity for insisting, or for compulsion, or any allusion to such things. What did I tell you this morning, Bates, about the dog?"

"He is gone, sir. He was at the barracks an hour ago."

This little conversational stroke brought back all Fermor's good humour. The thought that crossed his mind was, "How I excel in putting down low rough beings of this sort."

"I am glad to hear it," said the other, not a bit more softly. "I mistook, it seems. I thought you might not be inclined to do as asked. Sometimes, you know, you meet men who object to do things because they are required to do them. Some of your profession *have* that way. You will recollect, I had never spoken to you before."

"Well, curious to say, I always know a gentleman," said Fermor, "by a sort of instinct." He was in excellent vein, he thought, that morning.

"I am detaining you," said the other. "I must again apologise for disturbing you. I might have written, but writing is not nearly so much to the point as speaking. Writing leads only to more writing. It was only the necessity of the ease and comfort of one whom I care for more than I would for a dozen of myself, that could force me in upon the world in this way. In fact," he added, coming back a little, "it is only fair to let you know, if I had heard your dog last night, and he could not have been got to remain quiet, I should have quieted him at once. Between human welfare and canine life, you know, I could not hesitate. Good morning!"

And with this he passed out and shut the door.

Fermor looked after him, indignant, fuming, and yet mystified. "Such manners, such free and easy airs! Like every one in this place!" He tossed impatiently in his chair.

He was mending a good deal. He was better to-day than he had been yesterday, and looking in the glass, among his brushes heavy as ivory mallets, and his silver-topped bottles which might have filled innumerable bins in a small perfumery cellar, he was struck by what he called the "half delicate, half spiritual" tone his face had assumed. He looked down at his fingers, and rejoiced in their sort of mother-of-pearl tinge. Then he was ready to "see" people. Some of the "fellows" would be sure to come boring him with their dull talk, and now they had him helpless and at their mercy. But they did not come, and he sat there fretting because they were *sure* to come, and because, at the same time, they did *not* come. Captain Fermor was, however, not what is called popular with his fellows. The gap in their social ranks was noticed for a day or so, as a gap always makes itself noticed, but, beyond this, there was no regret. When his accident, and the little "sensation" it brought with it, had begun to pall, no one thought of the invalid wrecked upon the lonely shore of convalescence. He was indignant at this desertion, and over and over again pronounced them a "low, selfish set."

Young Brett, however, faithful as a terrier, appeared about noon, and Fermor, a little grateful for this attention, was almost inclined to pass a short statute excepting him from the penal clauses of general "lowness" and "cadship." Young Brett had not much to say, yet, somehow, was company. He had no flow of talk, and yet people—notably "fellows"—looked kindly towards him. Later, on his way out to India, he had gone in and out of a poor stranger officer's cabin, had cheered him with a word or two and a scrap of ship news, had read him a newspaper, but all without any effort or show. The sick officer died, and was cast over the side. Long after, when Young Brett had forgotten the voyage, he received a letter from a famous London gun-maker asking for directions as to the make of a gun he was busy with for him. The other repudiated the gun, and said there must be a mistake, which brought out, that the sick officer had added a postscript to the last letter he ever wrote, begging his people at home to send Young Brett a gun, as a token of how he esteemed his kindness.

He was now looking out of the back window of Fermor's lodgings, on the row of gardens, which were large, and pretty, and grassy. It was a fine sunny day. "Jove!" he said, "should like so to roll oneself in the grass—lie there all day, you know, and smoke-cigar after cigar. You ought to go out yourself. Yes, by Jove!" he added, as if lighting on a sudden discovery, "the very thing."

"And lie on the grass," said Fermor, "all day? No, no. That is not the life I should like."

"Well, I mean for a time, you know; the fresh air would set you up. Jove!" he added—

this was his favourite heathen god, whom he appealed to constantly—"there's some one in the next garden now. Come and look, Fermor. Did you ever see such a grim old 'buffer? He's as stiff as a musket."

"Yes," said Fermor, calmly, above all curiosity. "I know him. He came bursting in on me this morning: something about that dog you brought here."

"And I suppose you shut him up. A very awkward customer though, eh?"

"Why yes," said Fermor, placidly. "I think he did not take much by his visit. I have a way of my own for that class of people."

"Ah!" said Young Brett, with admiration; "that's it; just what I envy so in you. Jove!" he said, again; "look here. They're coming with a sort of procession, I declare. And a girl, and a maid, and a chair." Then, after a pause, a long deep drawn "By—Jove!"

Fermor looked out, succumbing to curiosity. There was a sort of little progress—a girl leaning on the grim figure, maid, pillows, chair, just as Young Brett had described. The sun was very strong and sultry, and not a breath of air abroad. The chair was set full in the sun, and the young lady assisted down into it, but sat with her back to the houses. The maid then opened her parasol for her. The grim figure stood over her, talking as grimly; at times walked away on a sort of beat with stiff iron motions, and came back.

"Why don't she turn round and let us see her face?" said Young Brett, impatiently. "I wonder who she is? Am sure she's pretty."

"She is the girl," said Fermor, with an air of knowledge. "I know it all. It was about her he came in."

"I thought it was about a dog," said Brett.

"Well, it might be. One don't necessarily exclude the other. Hush! I declare. Did you see her?"

She had looked round slowly while her father was away on his beat. They both saw her. A round, full, soft English face, full of goodness, and of the beauty of gentleness and good humour. But there were traces of sickness and delicacy.

"Jove!" said Young Brett, who was of the age at which every girl seems to be lent temporarily from paradise. "She is one! You are always in luck, Fermor. You always tumble on your feet in these sort of things. Lucky dog!" he added, with jocularly. "Don't tell me; you knew of this all the time, and picked out the house."

This sort of freedom, and on this class of subject, always made Fermor shiver. He said, coldly, "You took the lodgings yourself—you or that Major Carter—I forget which. I neither care nor know who are my neighbours."

"Nonsense! What nice work will be going on. Envyable fellow! Telegraphing, eh?"

Fermor coloured. Rallying confused him. "I don't understand you," he said, in a voice registered a good deal below zero. "I never do

understand that sort of thing. Pray don't talk in that way. I don't like it."

The other coloured in his turn. "I didn't mean—" he said. "I beg your pardon."

"No, no," said Fermor, soothed by this humility; "there are fellows with whom that sort of thing goes down. I don't care for it. It may be a defect; but I don't."

"I saw the Manuels this morning," said Young Brett, abruptly. "Ah! the second is a nice one. I am very glad, though, our friend is getting her; very glad."

"But is he, though?" said Fermor, contemptuously, and yet a little nervously. "Is he quite sure?"

"Well, I met him this morning, with a mouth open from ear to ear, and he squeezed my hand as if it were in a vice, and when I asked him when he was going away, he looked knowing, and said it depended. But I must be off myself; promised to go with Page and look at a horse."

"What a hurry you are always in!" said Fermor. "Surely you're not quite a Secretary of State, or Governor-General of India, or a Member of Parliament—or is this horse affair matter of life and death, that you can't afford to be a moment late? Will the horse die, if you are not precisely punctual?"

"O no," said poor Brett, sitting down ruefully under this shower of sarcasm. "Not at all; just as long as you please."

"Well, is there no news? Surely there must be something going on?"

"No; nothing that I know. Every day is much the same, you know."

"You should read Mrs. Barbauld's little story of 'Eyes and No Eyes.' If you don't use such faculties as you have, you will become quite dull. Did the Manuels tell you nothing? By the way, which of them did you see?"

"The second one. She was in the garden, and I spoke to her over the rails, and when I told her I was going to see you, by Jove—but you will be angry if I tell you."

"Not at all," said Fermor, good naturedly.

"Tell it your own way. Go on. Well?"

"Well, I assure you she had a bunch of scarlet geraniums in her hand, and I could not tell which was the reddest."

"Which? of the geraniums?"

"No; the geraniums or her cheeks. I am afraid, old fellow, you have been doing mischief there; I am indeed."

Fermor passed over the "old fellow" with wonderful good nature. He shook his head with great good humour, and said it was nonsense.

"And yet," said Young Brett, thoughtfully, "what deep ones they are!"

"Who?" said Fermor.

"O! women—girls!" said the beardless Rochefoucauld. "That night, when I caught her—Well, any fellow would have thought it was a desperate case, and yet, you see—"

Fermor suddenly became cold. "I don't follow you," he said.

"I mean," said Little Brett, "it turns out that all the while she is to marry that fellow. Any fellow would be taken in, you know."

"I can't keep up with you at all," said Fermor. "Your partiality for that word is quite confusing. Have you heard anything since? What do the precious gossips you go among say?"

"Well, Showers says—"

"O, Showers!" said Fermor, with contempt. (Showers was Thersites.) "Is he to be quoted?"

"I don't know," said the other. "He picks up whatever is going on, and he says they have settled it all, and that you—"

"I!" said Fermor, colouring. "Do you mean to say they have been daring to mix *my* name up in the business? I hope you have not been—I am sure you have—"

"No, no," said the other, in great alarm. "It was only one night that Showers was talking about you, and saying you went 'sniggering' after every girl, making people think they were dying for you, and I got angry, and—and—"

"And told what you saw that night," said Fermor, very hot and excited. "Just what I would expect. It was a great liberty. You had no business to do it. *Such* a thing!" And he began walking up and down the room.

"I never meant, I am sure—" said Little Brett, penitently.

"And how did he and those people take it? You may tell it all now."

"Well, they laughed," said the other, with great eagerness and candour, as a kind of atonement, "in a sort of way, you know. And Showers said he didn't believe it, that it was all brag, and that you were always in some 'sickly dream' or other, and that he had it from Hanbury himself, that very morning, that it was all settled."

Fermor groaned once more. This, again, was like being plunged into the sea on a December morning.

Little Brett, somewhat scared, left him still pacing up and down, and in great distress. He was morally shivering every time he thought of that odious Thersites Showers and his coarse jesting, and of the loud chorus laugh of the rest. Above all, his emphasis rested on "that *stupid* Brett." "But what could be expected," he said, with all scorn and pity, "from such a set? Not a gentleman among them: even their names—Thrupp, Slack! I should like to give them a lesson—to take them down a bit. I should like to show their mean natures how little they know about the matter." And with many bitter smiles he seemed to be laying out some very satisfactory schemes which would confound them all, and lay them grovelling at his feet.

CHAPTER XV. A CONVALESCENT VISITOR.

He was very indignant with the Manuel family, who had neglected him, as he considered it. The son came once only to ask after him, and he had merely called at the door. Not that he desired his society; for he considered him a sort of "low," brusque, ill-mannered foreigner, who, it

was plain, had never been with gentlemen. He (Fermor) could tell in a second whether he was "the real thing" or no. Clearly a fellow out of an orchestra. And this notion, which seemed to him something in the style of M. About, appeared a very happy illustration. "A low fellow out of an orchestra!" There was only the one lady in the family—and the more he thought of that little night incident, the more soft and agreeable it seemed. He thought of her as a "poor" faithful little worshipper. She was very pretty, and he declared that, as soon as he got well, she should be rewarded. If he had heard any one talk of "rewarding a girl" by a visit, he would have scoffed at him as a low, ungentelemanly creature; even if he were talking aloud with no one present, he would not have used such a form of words; but still the idea, as a sort of motive for his resolution, was present to him.

His health was mending rapidly. The fresh air of the place was serviceable; the improvement could be marked day by day. He had been down to his barracks; in a few days more he was to resume duty.

He dressed himself with care, looked in the mirror over the chimney-piece, and thought there was a refined "spiritual" tone, in such delicate colouring as there was in his face, not to be matched in the district. A gentle air of weakness—which would contrast well with the coarse robustness and gross health of some of his fellows. Going to a box of gloves, he chose out a pair—faintly coloured too, as with a blush—so as to be in keeping.

It was about five o'clock in the evening, and he sauntered straight to the house of the Manuels. The maid who had thought him "lovely," and who, indeed, had dwelt on his image very often since, broke into rustic smiles. "O yes, sir, I am sure they are in—some of the ladies."

He went up before her, opened the drawing-room door himself, and entered. There was only one figure there, sitting on a little low chair and looking listlessly out of the window, with her book half closed upon her knee. She did not even look round as she heard the door open.

She was pale. As Fermor did not speak, she looked round, started to her feet with a sort of cry, half ran forward—then stopped, her face and neck bathed in glowing carmine. She felt this rich colour dyeing her face, and put up both hands.

"Quite well?" said Fermor, delighted with these signs of his power. "This is the first day I have got out—the first hour, I may say—and yours is the first place I have found my way to."

She stood quite irresolute. "O," she said, "I am so glad. You must have suffered so much."

"I suppose I shall get strong again," said Fermor, "some of these days. May I get myself a chair?" he added, with a smile, as though he were saying some very lively thing.

Her face assumed a scared look at once. "O yes," she said; "but I am afraid—"

A shade came upon Fermor's fair forehead.

"I know," he said; "the regular objection. You are quite right, of course, on the score of propriety. I understand."

"O no, no, no, no!" she said, with extraordinary eagerness, and clasping her hands together piteously. "Not that! no, indeed!"

Fermor looked at her appealing eyes with admiration—with great satisfaction, too, in himself. "Bird fluttering in the fowler's net, and fluttering so prettily," was the idea floating in his mind. For curiosity and amusement he would make her flutter yet a little more. "You want me to go," he said. "I intrude here. And yet," said he, "for a sick man, tired by his first walk—exhausted, in fact—to be turned out—"

Again the little bird fluttered nervously to the window, fluttered back again, almost wrung her hands. Fermor began to be astonished.

"O!" she said, "it seems very odd and very cruel, but I gave a sort of promise. If you could come again later; indeed I could not help it; but if they come back—"

"I see!" said Fermor. "Upon my word, this is taking the shape of a romance. What a pity to put all your family to such trouble—solemn promises, and the like! I assure you there was no need. The shadow of a hint would have—But how a mere call of civility could cause any confusion or misapprehension, is, to me, a perfect mystery. Pray assure your family that they may set their minds at rest for the future."

This was more of the fowler and of the fowler's net. The little bird looked at him wistfully, and seemed inclined to sob.

"What shall I do?" she said. "I should not have told you. I don't know what you will think! O, let me go, please, for I am very unhappy!"

She flew past him out of the room, he looking after her with wonder, half pleased, half mortified. He should like to make an effective stage exit, but there was no audience. His curiosity was, besides, piqued—almost to a vulgar degree—and he was dying to learn. He walked away, and came back undecided; walked away again, and came back. "Poor little soul," he said, looking tranquilly at a Fermor that was in the glass, "it is very fresh and natural!"

He rang the bell suddenly, and presently came the maid who had thought him lovely. He spoke to her with exquisite politeness. "Might I give you the trouble," he said, "to ask Miss Violet Manuel if I could see her for one moment."

The girl went away delighted with the mission.

Violet appeared again at the door in sad confusion. "O," she said, "I have behaved so absurdly, so childishly, I am quite ashamed. You won't think of it. Will it be too much to ask you not to say that I have told you—"

"A little secret?" said the fowler, smiling. "Is it to be *our* secret? With all my heart. But what is the meaning of all this? What are these mysterious promises and tyrant relations? Or is

it my poor head that is not yet recovered? I think it must be."

She was hanging down her head, and said over again she had been so foolish and so ridiculous.

Fermor's voice became wonderfully soft. "Seriously," said he, "can I help you? If you were, indeed, to do me the honour of thinking me worthy of being consulted, such poor advice as I am capable of would be at your service. I have seen a little of the world, and have been knocked about here, there, and everywhere. I ought to know something. Do consult me, and I am sure I could help you."

A melancholy sort of flageolet voice was the most effective of all the instruments in Fermor's orchestra. He was playing on it now, and with surprising effect.

"O, you are so kind, so good," she said, tearfully, "and I don't know how to thank you. But they don't know, they don't understand—"

"They? Who?" said Fermor. "You won't be angry if I say something—that is, if I suspect that there is a friend of yours who has something to do with this. You see, a sick man hears something occasionally. Now, I know his nature very well, having come in contact with ever so many natures up and down the world. I may not have profited by all my opportunities as I ought to have done, but, in spite of myself, I have come to know human nature, at least. Well, Mr. Hanbury is an honest, good soul, that means well; and I seriously tell you, if he does make a mistake, and is hurried out of his regular course by a little honest roughness, I know enough of human nature to see that it is only on the surface."

"O, it is not that; but this place, as you know, is full of—stories," said the girl, passionately; "but I don't like him—never *can* like him! never!"

"Never like him!" said Fermor, looking round in astonishment. "How singular! How surprising!" (Over and over again, when he got home, did he rehearse this scene with delight and complacency, the exquisite skill with which he had "played" seeming to him above all other efforts of his life.) "Do tell me about this, for really I should have thought—but then I always forget that I have been a sick man with a battered head, and; what is worse, a defeated one, on an occasion when I would have given I can't say what to have gained a victory!"

Fermor was walking up and down the room as he spoke all this very volubly, his coat fluttering back as he walked, like the drapery of a robe.

"I should have come back to you, to your carriage, to be crowned; but it was no use struggling with destiny. Your wishes, I know, were against me, like a strong gale. You had *your* champion—why not? To say the truth, I never do expect to succeed in anything in life. I expect to be always near it—to want something just at the last moment. See the life I lead, forced to associate with that herd—a set of blocks—good in their own way, but for a mind

like mine that looks to better things, scarcely companions. I am a dreamer."

He was pacing up and down, delivering his speech with singular fluency. "A dreamer! Yes. Such dreams! During that illness you cannot fancy what dreams, and even visions—especially one night—here—in this house!"

He halted suddenly on his beat and looked at her. Again the carmine flood was gushing to the surface. "Curious, wasn't it?" he said, resuming his walk. He was charmed with the whole situation. It seemed to him that she was "hanging on his words." She was "under a sort of spell," he thought, afterwards. If he were a man inclined to boast, what a thing to tell—to overwhelm those creatures at the barracks.

He was surprised at his own fluency. He went on, still pacing: "You don't care to trust me, and yet, perhaps, I might be found useful. I often think I should have been a priest. Yes, I should have liked to have been a priest. To have sat all day long in a confessional—and yet, I dare say, I could guess the whole state of things. I have an instinct for human affairs, a strange instinct. I can read a situation like a book. I can read minds, too. For instance, I can take the front of this house off and look in. I know at once who are my friends," he went on; "in this house, how many have I? Possibly not one." This last sentence he spoke in a low, half-melancholy tone. "Possibly not one!" he repeated. "But that is a mere personal view. What does it matter? The other day, if there had been a little rough stone where I fell, why I should not be talking to you here—perhaps boring you terribly."

"No, no, no!" said the girl, casting down her eyes; "I could listen for—that is, I like hearing it."

"Then, as for you," continued he, glancing at the other Fermor in the mirror, "I can understand it all. Relatives, sisters, mothers, brothers, who have our interest at heart, and think they understand it better than we do, hurrying us eagerly on into some serious step—all for our good," added he, sarcastically. "Dear Miss Manuel, I feel like an old friend to you, and seriously—for it would be affectation in me to say I do *not* see that you have something on your mind—seriously, if by advice or assistance I can be of use, pray employ me."

She looked up at him with her full round eyes, now little, glistening, and tearful.

"O!" she said, "Mr. Fermor, I am unhappy, very unhappy; I don't know what to do. They are so kind, and so good, and mean so well, and all for my interest."

"Exactly," said he, smiling. "Everything disagreeable is for our interest." His intuitive knowledge of nature was surprising to himself.

"And I am, I may say, alone in the house, without support, and I do fear I shall be hurried into a step—which—"

Fermor went over, and sat down beside her on the sofa. He was going to hear it all. It was growing dusk. At that moment the door was

opened. A joyous, noisy, hearty figure burst in.

"We have been waiting for hours," it said: adding, after a bewildering pause, "What! Fermor?"

A POLITICAL PARROT.

A WARM day in spring in New York often means a hot day, such as oppresses London in August. The air seems full of gold-dust heated to the boiling point, and a native American takes to ice cream and brandy smashers remedially.

I was on "the shilling side of Broadway" (I do not know the origin of this derogatory designation) on one of those hot mornings in spring, when the metropolitan disposition to ice cream impelled me into a confectioner's shop. The back parlour of a former aristocratic dwelling was the refreshment-room. Its large windows looked towards the east, and the room was flooded with sunshine, such as a Londoner is never blessed nor blinded with;—for there are two sides even to the subject of sunshine. In the warm heart of the light there was a brilliant green parrot, fastened by a silver chain to a perch, where she seemed to rest from pure choice. She was singing as I never heard a parrot sing—with human naturalness and rollicking joyousness. The song, an ancient favourite with a certain class in the land of its birth, had met favour with all classes in the land of its adoption:

O, it's my delight on a shiny night, &c.

She sung it all, without once stopping or breaking down.

The waiter, who wiped the small table where I had seated myself and handed me the daily paper fastened in a machine lest it should run away, remarked, "Twenty year old, if she's a day!"

I gave my order, and then listened to the song until it was finished, as a respectful audience should, not interrupting to applaud. Then I said, "Bravo, Polly!"

The parrot turned her head, and looking at me sharply, said, rapidly, "What's your name? What do you want? Can you whistle?"

"What's your name?" I replied, in Yankee fashion: answering one question, or three, with another.

"Pretty Poll, pretty Poll, poor Poll! Polly wants a cracker. Polly Brown, Polly Brown, Captain John Brown's bird, ship Midas. Bought of a nigger king on the Gold Coast for a pair of red breeches and a roasting-pig. Brought to Philadelphia in eighteen hundred forty. Don't you know the devil's dead? Choked to death with a Quaker's head. Captain Brown's bird. Captain Brown's a Whig, wears a clean shirt."

This sent the parrot's associations to sea, and she proceeded to heave anchor with a will, changing merrily to sailor songs till an imaginary storm came on. Then she gave orders through a speaking-trumpet, proving that she had been forgotten and left on deck in a squall, and that she had not been so much frightened as to interrupt

the progress of her education. When the storm was over, she took to the pump, and sang with a tenderness and fair-weather-after-a-storm sweetness,

Rock and roll me over, one more day,
One more day, my darling,
One more day;
O, rock and roll me over,
One more day.

The parrot's usual sharp barking unhumanity of voice was not present in this specimen. She spoke and sang like a music-loving negro of intelligence and European training. Doubtless her first lessons had been given by such a master. I am sorry to be obliged to record, that presently Captain Brown's bird began a running fire of very naughty words. As the Yankees say, "it would not be pretty" to repeat this portion of the bird's performance. Like a good artist, she did not allow her audience to tire from the length of any part of her entertainment. She came by sudden transition to the rehearsal of political contests. She elected General Harrison to the presidency of the United States with great éclat, singing,

Have you heard the great commotion,
Motion, motion,
The country through?
It is the ball a rolling on,
For Tippecanoe and Tyler too,
And with them we'll beat little Van;
Van, Van, is a used-up man.

The English reader may need to be informed that General Harrison, then candidate for the presidency of the *then* United States, had once upon a time fought with some Indians at a place called Tippecanoe. A hero was wanted as candidate for the presidency. The "Hero of Tippecanoe" was selected, and duly nicknamed "Old Tip," and was sung into office. "Tyler, too," became vice-president, because a president involves the sequitor of a vice-president. "Little Van, Van," who was "a used-up man," was President Van Buren at the time of this election, in the fourth year of his reign over the great republic. The songs in this campaign, which were all faithfully remembered by the parrot, had a great family resemblance, and were not too reverent to be inconsistent with universal suffrage and "the sovereignty of the people." One of them, sang to the tune of O Susanna, alluded to the residence of Mr. Van Buren, and the product of his kitchen-garden, in the culture of which he was supposed to have much satisfaction:

I had a dream the other night,
When everything was still,
I dreamt I saw old Kinderhook
A comin' down the hill;
A cabbage stump was in his mouth,
A tear was in his eye,
Says he, we are beaten, North and South,
But Johnny, don't you cry.

Johnny was President Van Buren's only son, and a celebrated democratic "stump orator." The family residence was at Kinderhook.

The next "presidential campaign" rehearsed by the bird was that in which Mr. Henry Clay failed to be elected. The refrain of one of the songs was sung to the tune of Old Dan Tucker:

Get out of the way, you're all unlucky,
Clear the track for old Kentucky!

Millions of men, north, south, east, and west, had sung the same doggerel to the same negro music, with the same host of torchlight processions and tar-barrel bonfires, that the parrot was now singing in the soft sunshine of early spring, in the metropolis of the great republic.

Captain Brown's bird was a living history of much that had not found record elsewhere. When at last she ceased to sing, I turned to the table, to find a melted ice cream and an iced sherry cobbler awaiting my leisure. I paid proper attention to the legitimate fluid, and was paying my score, when a young girl, as pretty as young American girls often are, brushed past me, and past her faded and attenuated mother, who sat at the receipt of cash, evidently going to school; for she had a book and a porcelain slate in her hand. The parrot cried out briskly, "Maggie, have you got your Geography?" She replied, "Yes, I have," and went her way. The feminine cashier assured me that the parrot knew the meaning of all she said, and of all that was said to her. The proprietress believed in her rational powers as fully as the negroes believe in those of the monkey. "I only wish," said she, "that she would not say so many things that are *not pretty*."

Should the age of the parrot be correctly estimated by naturalists, this same bird may live to celebrate a dozen more presidential elections: or perhaps the inauguration of an elective monarchy.

TWOPENNY TOWN.

TWOPENNY TOWN is one of the most salubrious, and yet one of the most despised, quarters of the metropolis. Persons with a turn for gentility, who have so far got on in life as to be able to reside in the aristocratic neighbourhood of Russell-square, speak of Twopenny Town with the greatest contempt. When they wish to mark the low social status of a person, they mention with a sneer that he lives at Twopenny Town. They talk facetiously of Twopenny Town as a distant and unknown region, to which only the most adventurous explorers have penetrated, and from which travellers have returned to tell strange tales of rude and inhospitable natives, who live in ground-floor parlours, poison their guests with twenty-seven shilling sherry, and go out to parties in cleaned gloves. In these aristocratic circles—albeit within ten minutes' walk of the Mob-Cap, the centre and capital of the despised region—the very mention of Twopenny Town is considered equivalent to a good joke. It calls up in the genteel mind's eye absurd pictures of life in parlours, bed and breakfast for ten shillings a week, with use of sitting-room, and dinner on Sundays;

evening parties with beef sandwiches for supper; chairs and sofas covered with American leather cloth, and a general sitting down to tea—with shrimps when in season, otherwise “creases”—at five o'clock. In fact, Twopenny Town, from the Russell-square point of view, is a monstrously absurd place; a laughable place altogether.

There are some persons so keenly conscious of the ridicule which attaches to Twopenny Town, that they will never own that they live there. When Russell-square asks them where they dwell, they artfully avoid reproach by saying, “Up the Park way.” When Russell-square and Twopenny Town start together from the West-end, bound for home, and Russell-square says, “Which way do you go?” Twopenny Town cautiously replies, “Northward.” I really believe there are people of genteel aspirations who sneak in and out of Twopenny Town every day as if Twopenny Town were a wild beasts’ lair or the hiding-place of a thief. When Russell-square happens to be in the neighbourhood, and catches a resident in the act of being there treading in an accustomed manner the pavements of Twopenny Town, the resident immediately stammers out an apology for his misconduct, and says he has been to visit a person “up that way.” Perfectly conscious of all this, and even admitting the ungenteel character of the quarter, I am nevertheless willing publicly to own—not that, when I proceed towards my home, I “go northward,” or that my residence is “up the Park way”—but plainly, in a straightforward manner, that I live and treasure my Lares and Penates in the very heart of Twopenny Town. I am not ashamed of it. On the contrary, I glory in it.

You—I am addressing Russell-square—have no idea what a wonderful place Twopenny Town is. It is such a very wonderful place, and so little known to the haunts of genteel civilisation in which you move, that I am tempted to write an account of my travels and residence in the region, to be published by Mr. Murray in a thick volume printed in large type, with marginal references, foot-notes, and a map.

Looking from my window at this moment, I have a full view of all the wonders of science and art at one glance. That great invention, steam, displays itself in all its remarkable applications to the purposes of man. I see railway trains incessantly rattling along, tearing madly after each other, and apparently playing at follow-my-leader among the chimneys; underneath I see a steam barge puffing up the canal like an amphibious locomotive; I see also the mast of a ship, and, above all, the electric telegraph ruling the sky, like a sheet of blue-wove Bath post, for music. Right and left, photographers meet my view, exhausting the beams of the summer sun, and, as it appears to me, bringing on winter prematurely, in their endeavours to fix the lineaments of the Twopenny Townian on slips of card, at the charge of ten shillings a dozen. My wonderful prospect takes in any number of yellow omnibuses that go “all the way” for twopenny; any number of red

ditto, that go all the way for a penny; three pastrycooks, ready and willing to execute wedding orders at five minutes’ notice; four undertakers, equally ready and willing to execute funeral ditto, with the same promptitude, at charges to suit any length of pocket and any depth of grief. When I add to this an emporium for the supply of claret at twelve shillings a dozen, I think you will allow that my view is a most comprehensive one, and that the wonders of nature, art, science, and commerce, are concentrated in Twopenny Town in a tableau well adapted for the frontispiece of a school edition of the Wonders of the World. Stay! I forgot to mention a figure of Britannia on the top of a public-house, and a lion couchant on the summit of a brewery. When a balloon happens to travel this way, my view may be said to embrace the whole circle of the sciences. If Zadkiel should be in need of a good telling hieroglyphic, let him come up and take a sketch from my window. There was a fine chance for him the other day, when the British lion was asleep on the top of the brewery, Britannia was having her shield taken down for repairs, and a locomotive engine was taking a leap from the viaduct into the street below. It was a deeply impressive portent of grief to Britannia.

I might say that Twopenny Town is in the perpetual enjoyment of all the luxuries of the season. What is there that heart or hand could desire that it does not possess? Will any one be good enough to mention the article? Aristocracy? Why, there is a lady in Full-Moon-street who is the rightful heir to the throne, and has papers to prove it, if anybody would only look at them. This Royal Personage, coming down my street in a yellow satin gown, with a troop of boys at her heels, puts a touch to the hieroglyphic which leaves nothing to be desired, except, perhaps, an eclipse of the sun.

The drama? Are not all our back drawing-rooms stages? all our young men and women merely players, having their exits and their entrances by the same one door on the landing at the top of the stairs among the cups and saucers? I can assure you, when we engage in private theatricals, we do the thing in style; print the programmes on scented note-paper with embossed borders, and get up all our pieces with appropriate scenery and the correct costumes. Our company never had a break down but once, and that was when we played Box and Cox at the Theatre Royal Fourteen Melpomene Terrace. Jobbins, who played Box, was a great stickler for the realities, and *would* insist upon having a real fire, and a real mutton-chop to throw out of window. It certainly was very natural and effective to see Jobbins, as Box, come in and chuck a real chop, frizzling from the fire, out of a real window into a real street; but, unfortunately, a crusty old gentleman with a white hat on his head was passing at the moment, and the chop fell right on the crown of the hat, and printed off an impression of itself with the

grave. The old gentleman was in an awful rage, rang the door-bell, and made such a disturbance that we were obliged to stop the performance. We began it all over again, however, when he went away, taking the precaution to station a policeman outside to warn the people off when the chop was coming. Some one said that the policeman caught the chop, and was seen going off gnawing it, but I can't answer for that. I only know that the crusty old gentleman brought an action for the damage done to his hat, and recovered four-and-ninepence, with costs.

The private pursuit of the drama in the more select quarters of Twopenny Town has been greatly conducive to matrimony. On several occasions the mimic love of the stage has ripened into the real article, and led to performances of another kind, which, in respect of a procession of maidens clad in white, and the employment of grey horses, may not improperly be described as spectacular and equestrian. If it be true that a difference of disposition in man and wife is necessary to preserve the true balance of matrimonial happiness, then, I should say, our stage-made marriages are likely to turn out well; as, in most cases, they have been a union of tragedy and comedy. We all thought for a long time it was Mrs. Bouncer that Box was sweet upon, and that Iago (we play a selection—usually the third act) had fixed his affections upon Emilia. But it proved, in the end, to be quite the contrary. Box got spliced to Emilia, and Mrs. Bouncer was led to the hymeneal altar by Iago. This arrangement, otherwise happy, was so far disadvantageous that it led to the retirement of both parties from the boards; Box being averse to Emilia playing with strange Iagos, and Iago being averse to Mrs. Bouncer playing with strange Boxes. An attempt was made to accommodate matters, but without success. Iago could not stoop to low comedy, and Box found it wholly beyond his power to elevate himself to the level of high tragedy. The consequence is, that Iago and Box now confine themselves to solo recitations; Iago giving us Brutus and Cassius, and Box his own serio-comic poem of the “Cheery Petiwinkle.”

Is there anything else you would like to mention? Music? Could a community desire anything better than the Minerva Music Hall? It has this advantage over the opera, that you are not obliged to go in evening-dress. No one but the head waiter wears a dress coat and a white choker, and the prices are;—body of the hall twopence, balcony fourpence, stalls ninepence. The amount of talent which is displayed for these moderate charges is immense. Look at the bill—“Mr. and Mrs. Loppits, the charming duettists; Signor and Signora Polloni, the versatile dramatic operatic couple; Joe Barnes, the comic; Gus Davis, the funny little man; Mademoiselle Pettitoe, the charming ballerina and transformation dancer; Paddy Fannagan, the characteristic Irishman; and stunning Joe Pollock, the pet of Twopenny Town.” The mud-

bespattered brougham that you see waiting at the door about half-past nine belongs to Mr. and Mrs. Loppits, the charming duettists. I am surprised that the proprietor does not mention the brougham in the bills, for it is almost as charming as Mr. and Mrs. Loppits themselves. Ladies and gentlemen proceeding to the body of the hall, twopence, pause to gaze upon it with awe and admiration. Gentlemen, whose means are inadequate to the body of the hall, twopence, are content to remain outside and pat Mr. and Mrs. Loppits' horse, by the kind permission of Mr. and Mrs. Loppits' coachman, a grave and dignified person, who appears to ignore the music-hall, and to try to look as if his connexion with Mr. and Mrs. Loppits did not extend beyond the legitimate duty of driving their brougham. I should mention, that Mr. and Mrs. Loppits' horse is a tall aristocratic looking animal, with a Roman nose, and is known to some irreverent grooms in the adjoining mews as Julius Cæsar.

I am inclined to think that our music-hall was formerly a chapel. My reason for so thinking is, that the body of the hall is furnished with rows of narrow desks instead of tables. These desks, though used at present as a resting-place for pewter pots, seem to have been originally designed to support hymn-books. The material of the desks being plain deal, and the grain coarse, I should say that the denomination was methodistical and primitive. The clock in the front of the gallery is of a sombre and severe aspect, and the effort it makes to cover its face with two hands and a half, seems to imply that it is ashamed to keep time to the present goings on. This disposes me to think that it may at one time have been used to Sunday duty and sermons.

Mr. and Mrs. Loppits are charming duettists undoubtedly. They generally enact lovers: Mrs. Loppits, strong munded, in a low-bodied pink dress; Mr. Loppits, weak minded and bashful, in a fluffy white hat and bed curtain trousers. Mr. Loppits' assumption of bashfulness, by putting his forefinger in his mouth and shaking himself laterally, is much esteemed. The steadiness of the chorus which comes in at the end of the dialogue, as if Mr. and Mrs. Loppits had been wound up for it, is also greatly admired. Mr. and Mrs. Loppits “oblige again” three times, and then depart down the body of the hall with two carpet-bags, followed by admiring eyes until they disappear to enter their brougham. The greatest favourite, and deservedly so, is “Joe Barnes, the comic.” Mr. Barnes comes on in a little white hat with a little black band round it, and wears a very short tartan jacket. The humours which he expresses by cocking his hat on the front of his head, the back of his head, the side of his head, and by pulling it right over his eyes, are as various as the chords of the human heart. His hat may be said to sweep the whole lyre of the comic muse. Mr. Joe Barnes's favourite songs are Naughty Femina Brown, The Barber's Wife, and Fickle False Matilda. All three point morals. Naughty

Jemima Brown is an example of ingratitude. Her young man took her out and treated her to cakes and wine, but, notwithstanding all his kindness, naughty Jemima jilted him. The Barber's Wife is a faithless woman, who, being struck with remorse, puts an end to her existence with the weapon most convenient for the rhythm and the rhyme, which happens to be a carving-knife. This is much applauded. But the prime favourite is Matilda, who, having a chorus, can be taken up by the whole audience. When Mr. Joe Barnes stamps his foot and says, "Now then, all together," stalls, body of the hall, and balconies, break forth in unison:

Matilda! Matilda!
Fickle, false Matilda!
She's broke my heart and ruined me,
That faithless bonnet build-ah.

She was a very greedy, gormandising, young woman was Matilda, ate pounds of pork sausages, drank gin-and-water, and went on in such an outrageous way, that we quite sympathised with the young man when he confesses that "he thought he should have killed-ah."

Paddy Fannagan's song of the Irish wake is highly characteristic. Paddy Fannagan comes on in a bob-tailed frieze coat, and a hat without a brim or a crown—the national costume of Ireland—and puts his shillelagh on the floor, saying that it represents the body of the deceased Patrick O'Whack. Mr. Fannagan then puts a red handkerchief round his head, and at once becomes Shelah, weeping and wailing over the lifeless form of Patrick. He takes off the red handkerchief, and becomes Murdoch O'Grady, roundly abusing the prostrate Patrick as a big blackguard, and after subjecting the corpse to every indignity, concludes, amid thunders of applause, by spitting in Patrick's eye. If you have anything in the characteristic way that will match this in the neighbourhood of Russell-square, perhaps you will just say so.

The performances of Mademoiselle Pettitoe, the charming ballerina and transformation dancer, are described in the bills as "pleasing," which, however, is a weak expression. They may be said to be highly sensational. Mademoiselle Pettitoe comes on first of all as a Scotch fish-girl, dances in a manner characteristic of Scotia, and runs off to return the next minute as an Irish colleen, with a jig; then a dusky daughter of Egypt; and, in rapid and breathless succession, as a female representative of Spain, Italy, Poland, and other picturesque countries, until she reduces her costume to that scant condition which leaves nothing beyond the assumption of the God of Love. When Mademoiselle Pettitoe dances violently in this character, with nothing on to speak of but a bow and arrow, there is always a feverish expectation mingled with some apprehension that she will incontinently appear next, without going off, as the God of Love's mother.

Have we got anything in Twopenny Town like the Pantheon, or the Burlington Arcade? Have we not? Just look at Main-street in the

evening, when the naphtha lamps are lighted. Why, there is a mile of Pantheon on one side, and a mile of Burlington Arcade on the other—a moving panorama of life and merchandise in all its branches. What d'ye lack? What may you be pleased to require? Name the article. Rings, pins, brooches, chains, combs, garters, embroidered strips for petticoats, onions, oysters, fried fish, tinted note-paper, umbrellas, all the popular music of the day, cucumbers, illustrated works of fiction, boot-laces, roots, artificial flowers, net caps, crinolines, plates and dishes, teacups, saucepans, bear's grease, herb pills—they are all here, and a thousand choice articles de Londres besides. Why, Main-street is the Palais Royale *al fresco*. Look at our baked potato machine! Is there another like it in London—in the world? In other quarters it is a mere can; here it is a vast machine with a furnace beneath, and no end of drawers above with bushels of potatoes in every stage of readiness. And here, I may remark, that I don't know any place except Twopenny Town where you can get baked potatoes and fried fish all the year round. In heat and in cold, in joy and in sorrow, baked potatoes and fried fish are constant to us still.

Is it amusement combined with instruction you require? There is the Bacon Institute in Fryer-street, alternating lectures on the causes of pauperism and crime, with recitals from the dramatic poets, an address to the inhabitants on the abuses prevalent in the vestry, and an "Olla Podrida of Fun, Fact, Fancy, and Ventriloquy, by Mr. Inigo Inwards." N.B. An infant's school on the ground floor, and the hall let on Sundays to preachers of any denomination, who are prepared to pay the exceedingly moderate rent in advance. Then there is the People's Forum in Canal-bridge-road, where we have the rights of man on Monday, the wrongs of the working classes on Tuesday, demonstrations against the highway rate on Wednesday, tea meetings with prayer on Thursday, rifle band on Friday, and the trial of John Barleycorn on Saturday; judge, jury, counsel, and witnesses, all being local converts from habits of the most frightful intemperance to the principles of total abstinence, the counsel for the prosecution affording a most edifying example as one who, through intemperance, was the death of his aged grandmother.

If you ask where we, the inhabitants of Twopenny Town, are in the habit of going on Sunday? I answer you that we are in the habit of going to church on Sunday. And we have a choice of churches in Twopenny Town—a very wide choice of churches. I don't think there is a denomination that you could mention, from the Church of England in all its varieties of high, low, and broad, down to the Latter-day Saints and the Shakers, that does not boast a temple within our district. And we are well supplied with out-door religious exercises besides. There is a clergyman of the Church of England who preaches every Sunday, weather permitting, in gown and bands, from a Windsor chair in front

of the Mob-Cap. He is very popular, and can always manage to hold the attention of his audience, when he does not extend his sermon beyond one o'clock. When he is indiscreet enough to overstep that limit, he finds that the attractions of beer are too much for him. A little higher up the road we are edified by an awakened tinman, who draws his illustrations from his own family circle, and occasionally tells us what pious thoughts came into his wife's head when she was washing the greens for dinner. The tinman has so often mentioned his boy Tommy in a religious and doctrinal connexion, that I begin to regard Tommy as an extra Scriptural personage, and an essential part of the new doctrine. I have a vague sort of feeling that some day or other I shall be required to subscribe to Tommy. In the evening, a youth of tender years addresses us, with his eyes shut, as "O, his friends," from the top of a four and a half gallon cask close to the open side-door of the House of Call for Plasterers. This preaching is promoted by the landlady of the House of Call for Plasterers, who stands at the door to listen—leaving her daughters to serve at the bar—and appears greatly to profit by the youth's ministrations, both as a publican and as a sinner. If heresy and strange doctrine be what you want, come to Twopenny Town. There is a chapel up the road where all the heresies are introduced the moment they arrive from Oxford or South Africa. The reverend proprietor sends round circulars to inform us when he has added any strange doctrine to his collection. We have had all the new things as they came out: the Rejection of the Thirty-nine Articles; the Denial of Moses; the Explosion of Noah's Ark; and I have no doubt that the Fallacy of Baptismal Regeneration "will shortly be added."

Literature? Twopenny Town boasts two newspapers, solely devoted to the interests of the locality, recording from week to week, for the small charge of one penny, the doings of the vestry, the local improvement board, and the workhouse committee, and keeping a sharp eye—two sharp eyes—upon the half-yearly rating. N.B. Advertisements threepence a line; servants wanting places and apartments to let (with or without board, or partial) at a reduction. The editors, or proprietors, have no objection to call and leave your copies early on the day of publication. Five circulating libraries within a radius of a quarter of a mile, where all the oldest standard works may be obtained; twopence a volume for as long as you like, and the librarians don't mind if you never return them. The *Fine Arts*? The barber's in Nobthatch-street, where you may have your hair cut for threepence—including brushing by machinery—and enjoy the contemplation of all the masters, old and young, on view, or for sale; on view gratis, a genuine Correggio, or on sale, two pound fifteen, with a pot of bear's grease or a bottle of wash for thinness on the top, thrown in.

Is there anything else you would like to

mention? Nothing? Very well then; allow that Twopenny Town is a world in itself, leaving nothing to be desired.

QUITE ALONE.

THE continuation of this Story is postponed until next week.

MEDUSA.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER IV.

THE next morning, Edward Saville watched the old serving-man out, he saw the two girls start in the direction of Kensington Gardens, and he determined once more to essay his blandishments, backed with another half-crown, upon the little maid-of-all-work. He had not closed his eyes all night, and could not rest until he had acquired some definite information with regard to his neighbours.

He rung at the bell, and Jane answered it.

"I am sure you're a good-natured little puss," he said, giving her the half-crown; "and you won't refuse to tell me who it was playing so beautifully on the piano last night. I had my window open, and was listening all the evening: was it Miss Elizabeth?"

"Oh laws no," said Jane, "that was Mr. William; he do play beautiful to be sure! I often listens myself."

"Oh, that was Mr. William, was it? And does he often come and play here?"

"Why, to be sure he do," answered the girl; "he's Mrs. Hausmann's own son, and he's here a'most every evening."

"Oh, Mrs. Hausmann's son, is he?" It was her brother, then—and he drew a long breath. "What fun they were having afterwards! Miss Elizabeth fell fast asleep in the moonlight."

"Laws!" said the girl, "that was Countess Vander, that wasn't Miss Elizabeth."

"No, no," said Edward Saville, impatiently, with a renewal of agitation; "I mean Miss Elizabeth, the tall lady in white."

"I know," interrupted the girl, "with all her hair down to her feet—well, that's Countess Vander, that is."

"Jane!" called a loud voice from within, and the conscience-stricken Jane vanished under ground, as a homely-looking old German woman, with a stern careworn aspect, walked straight up to the street-door, and shut it in his face.

Nothing daunted, he repaired to the florist's, and, having provided himself with another beautiful nosegay, left it at the house as he came back. He gave it to the old man-servant with a sovereign, and begged him to deliver it to Countess Vander, the tall lady with the long fair hair. In about ten minutes his flowers were again returned to him, with the following note:

Sir,—I must beg you to abandon a pursuit which is extremely annoying to us, and can only be productive of disappointment and unhappiness to yourself. Your attentions are not welcome

to the lady to whom they are offered, and, in your own interest, I warn you not to continue them.

MARGARET HAUSMANN.

He saw that no support was to be hoped for from the old lady; but, not deterred by this severe little missive, resolved to see whether the younger woman were not more assailable, and could not be enlisted in his favour. Since the strange scene which he had been a witness to in the garden, he had returned with some degree of bitterness, and scorn of himself for his romance, to his first misgivings about the mysterious woman who had so bewitched him. The certainty of her light conduct had at last cut itself with a sharp pang into his heart; but with that certainty had slid in a much more positive hope than he had ever before ventured to indulge, and one that, as we have seen, led him to more open measures of pursuit than he had yet hazarded.

For two days he watched incessantly for an occasion of speaking to her, but in vain. The third morning brought him better luck, and he saw Miss Hausmann, at last, leave the house alone; here was the opportunity ready made for him. He took his hat and followed her at some distance; she went along the Bayswater-road, until she came to the top of Oxford-street, and prepared to cross over into Hyde Park. Edward Saville was close behind her now, and had made up his mind, as soon as they were in the Park, to address her. There was a tremendous double line of carts, cabs, and omnibuses, and they were obliged to wait some little time in order to let them pass. At last there was a momentary opening, and Miss Hausmann went across. She had not, however, perceived an omnibus which was coming down full tilt upon her. "Go back! go back!" shouted the terrified people from both sides, who saw her danger. Bewildered by their cries, instead of going rapidly either back or forward, she hesitated fatally, and the next instant was knocked down by the pole of the omnibus. The driver, who was looking another way, was quite unable to pull up his horses in time, and she must infallibly have been run over had not Edward Saville, rushing forward, seized the bridle and violently backed the horses at his own peril, saving her from the death that, to the alarmed bystanders, had appeared all but inevitable. As it was, she was more frightened than hurt, but her ankle was badly sprained. He carried her in his arms to the first shop at hand, where she had a glass of water, and sat for a few moments to recover the shock. He then called a cab for her, and saw her to her own house. When they arrived, her foot was much worse; it gave her great pain, and she could not put it to the ground. Edward Saville explained what had happened to the old man, who went to fetch his mistress. Great was her tribulation at hearing of her daughter's accident, but great was also her gratitude. Edward, assisted by the old man, carried Miss Hausmann

into the drawing-room and placed her on a sofa, after which, laden with the heartfelt thanks of both mother and daughter, he withdrew. About two hours later he received a message from the next house; Madame Hausmann wished to speak to him, if he would be kind enough to come and see her. She met him in the hall, and, drawing him into the little sitting-room, closed the door.

"You have been kind to my child, and done me a service I can never repay. You are rich, I am poor. I can never serve you but in one way only, and that is by telling you what I had thought never to tell to any soul alive. You must come here no more," she said; "forget Wanda—she is an ill-fated creature, who can but darken your young days. I have tried to warn you, but youth is mad, and won't be warned. Now listen, and judge what hope there is for you." She made him sit down, and then spoke as follows:

"We are from Bohemia. My husband was a doctor in the small town of Altheim, and we lived there till he died. When I lost him, we left the town (I and my three children), and came to live again in the country, not far from the little village of Wallendorf, where I was born, and had passed all my childhood.

"We lived in a lonely cottage in a very wild spot, on the borders of a forest. Elizabeth, Francis, little William, and myself. Wanda is not my daughter, she is my foster-child only. We were tenants of Count Berchthold, a rich powerful lord, who had property all over the country. About four miles from us he had a castle, and lands, and great woods, that stretched as far as our cottage. This castle was always empty; he would come there for a day or two once in three or four years, for the shooting; but it was never inhabited except at such times. When he was in the country he lived himself in another great castle which he had, about fourteen miles from our part of the world, and about seven from the town where my husband was established.

"The count was a proud man with a heart of stone; the only thing he cared about was the greatness of his name, and the despair of his life was, that though he had been married many years, there was no heir. The countess was barren, and his great name would die out, and the property would all go to a female cousin, and so pass away from the family. He hated his wife, poor lady, and never went near her. There was no insult he did not heap upon her for this sad misfortune of her childlessness.

"My husband knew her; he had been sent for once in a hurry to attend her; she had had a fall, and broken her arm. They did say, that in one of his mad rages the count had thrown her against a marble table, and that so her arm had got broken. I don't know how that may be; he had so ill a name, and was so feared and hated, that the worst case was always made out against him: there was no need of that; he was bad enough, anyhow. What perhaps gave a colour of truth to the story was, that as soon as

ever she got well, she sent for her brother, who took her straight away with him to Prague, where she remained, and always after lived separate from her husband. As for him, he used to spend most of his time at Vienna, leading an awful life with companions as wicked as himself: he delighted in being surrounded with wild young men, and never rested till he had made them as godless as he was. About seven years after I married and settled at Altheim, and while the count was away, travelling about in foreign parts, the countess died. She had not been in her grave four months, when a letter arrived for Mr. Hartmann, the count's agent, who lived in Altheim, announcing his speedy arrival; he had married again, and was going to bring his bride home, and the house was to be got ready without delay. We were astonished at the news, for the count was fifty-five years old, and no one had ever thought he would have married again.

"Shortly after this, some of the servants began to arrive at the castle, and by-and-by reports got spread abroad that it was a young lady of seventeen whom he was going to bring to that dreary home. There was a great deal of talk about it; some said that it was a good thing for the country that my lord should come back, and that the castle should be inhabited; others said that he and his profligate companions and loose servants did more harm than good in the place, spreading corruption: moreover, he had no bowels for the poor, and oppressed and ground down all who were dependent upon him. But we all were sorry for the poor young lady who had come so far away from her own land, and her own people, to live amongst us. When my lord's secretary, Johann Wild, arrived at last to see that all was straight, he told us more about it. The young countess was a Polish lady of great family, but without any fortune; and her parents had driven her into this marriage because the count, who had fallen in love with her for her beauty, had consented to take her without a dowry. Mr. Wild told me they had had sad work to bring her to it, and that she looked more dead than alive on the wedding-day, which did not please the count.

"They arrived late one night in May, and the next morning my husband was sent for up to the castle. The countess was tired with her journey, and had a slight attack of fever. Count Berchtold met him on the stairs, and took him at once into her room; she was very lovely, and quite young, as they had said. The count took him up to the bedside; her arms were lying outside upon the coverlet; he took up one of them, and while he felt it all over, said to my husband, 'Look at her! There are arms! There are shoulders!' The poor little lady coloured scarlet, and turned her head away, but the count only laughed, and went on, 'See to her, doctor, see to her, and tell me what it is that ails her; if it is the son she means to give me, that shall be good news for you as well as me.'

"My husband had trouble to get him out of

the room, but at last he went, and then the poor child burst into tears, and sobbed as if her heart would break. She was in a frightful state of excitement, and could not be persuaded to speak for a long while; but by degrees, seeing how patient and gentle my husband was, she quieted down at last. We afterwards heard that she had not known of the recent death of the former countess, and that, on arriving, she had received a great shock at finding all the servants assembled in the hall to meet her, clad in the deepest mourning: she told my husband besides, that coming from a smiling country, and belonging to a large family, the loneliness and desolate look of the castle had frightened her: she was evidently terribly afraid, too, of her lord; this she did not say to him, but my husband saw it.

"They had already been married more than two months, and there seemed to be little doubt as to her condition: the count was wild for joy when my husband told him this; he sent for some rare Hungarian wine, and tossed down glass after glass, making my husband drink with him to the health of the heir. My husband had seen in this short visit how nervous and excitable the timid young wife was, and tried to impress upon the count's mind that gentleness and perfect quiet were absolutely necessary for her health and for that of her child; but teach a wild beast to be gentle! The house was soon filled again with riotous guests, and my husband was repeatedly called in to see the countess, whose senses seemed actually to be leaving her, so great was her distress at finding herself helpless and alone in such strange company. She had been taken straight out of the convent to be married, and this wild life put her beside herself with terror. Her husband, who soon had got wearied of her, angered by her refusals to join in his godless revelry, used to jeer and mock at her before his servants, and often would force her, ill as she was, to come down and assist at his orgies. Her nerves were completely shaken, and my husband began seriously to fear for her reason.

"At last her hour of trouble came. My husband was sent for early in the evening, and finding her state alarming, remained with her all night. The count had been drinking very deep, and they tried in vain to keep him out of the apartment; he would be there—opposition only infuriated him, and increased his wife's danger. After many hours of dreadful suffering, towards five in the morning her baby was born. 'Show me my son!' shouted the count, springing from his chair to the bedside. It was a feeble, puny, wailing little girl. In a paroxysm of speechless rage, he rushed at his helpless wife, and shaking her violently, dashed her back upon the bed. My husband called for help, and they forced the count away from the room. The poor thing had fainted. No nurse had been provided, for she had meant to nurse her little one herself, and there it lay, hungry, and wailing piteously, by its mother's side. My husband took the baby in his arms, and going with it to the

count, asked him if he would let me have the child to nurse. 'Have her!' he said, savagely, 'yes, and keep her too—take the little screaming wretch away, and never let me see its hated face again!' And so Wanda (she was named Wanda after her mother) was brought to me, and I nursed her at the same time with my own Wilhelm, who had been born just three weeks before.

"The countess never recovered that shock; fainting-fit succeeded fainting-fit for days together, and when at last they left her, her wits were gone. She was very gentle and harmless, but hardly ever spoke, and seemed to have gone into a kind of hopeless melancholy. I saw her once when she was still quite young; we had been staying with my mother at Wallendorf, and we drove through the grounds and past the castle on our road back to Altheim. My husband showed her to me—she was sitting at an open window on an upper floor of the house, looking out over the long avenue and the dreary flats beyond; she was dressed in black, and was leaning back propped up in her chair. She looked very fearful—like an old blighted child—with a quantity of white hair hanging down, all uncombed and uncared for, about her face and neck. I did not sleep for many a night after seeing her, for thinking of that dreadful withered child's face, with its mad, miserable eyes, and the unnatural snow-white hair. As we went by, she jumped and danced, and screamed to us, and her women had trouble to hold her. She had never gone over the threshold of her door from the hour of her confinement, and passed her whole life at that window, looking out over the long avenue to the miles and miles of level plain that stretched beyond, as if she expected to see, as a speck, from far away the carriage coming nearer and nearer with long lost friends, who would take her from this miserable place. But she had been for some years out of the world, and no one remembered her but death. My husband saw her die—no one else was near to help her: she was taken with some sort of fit one morning, and they sent for him. He saw there was no hope, and thought it was his duty to write and warn the count, who was at Vienna, that she could not last long. One dreary night in December, my husband was watching with her, and so was the good Liesel, the nurse he had brought for her from the town, for she had no proper attendants, only some of the peasants belonging to the estate, to wait upon her. The count had sent no answer, and they thought he might arrive at any moment. It was just about one in the morning, when a great gust of wind rattled down all the chimneys, and the dogs began suddenly to bark and clamour, and my husband fancied he heard the sound of wheels driving up to the door. He looked round at the countess, and saw that she had heard it too, and that in some strange way it troubled and distressed her; for he could hear her heart beat, and she turned her poor eyes upon him, full of an anguish that it went to

his soul to look upon. He sent Liesel down to see if any one had arrived, and took hold of the poor lady's hand to comfort and quiet her; but she was getting more and more agitated, and gasped fearfully for breath which she did not seem able to get. A quick heavy tread came up the stairs, the door was thrown open, and Count Berchtold entered. She knew him at once, though she had not set eyes on him for all those years, and in her fright and agony she flung herself wildly out of bed before they could stop her, and fell upon the floor. My husband rushed to pick her up, but she just gave one struggle and a little sigh, and with it her dismal life had passed away. The count gave orders for a magnificent funeral; but he did not stay to see them executed. All the carriages and horses from that castle, and all the carriages and horses from the other castle near Wallendorf, came out for the occasion: and there were torches and music to carry her to the family vault in the grounds. Numbers streamed out from the town to look at the sight. I went with my husband and my brother-in-law and his wife, but we were all of us strangers as it were, and it was sad to see the long procession of mourning coaches and family coaches going along stately and slow, quite empty. I have often wondered if any of her family ever knew the sad end she had made so far away from them all.

"Soon after it pleased God to take my husband from me, and my means were much restricted in consequence; the children, too, were growing up, and becoming a greater expense to me, and, as I told you, we gave up living in the town, and came back to settle once more near my native village of Wallendorf. Wanda was eleven years old then, and William the same age; Elizabeth was thirteen, and my eldest boy, Francis, was fifteen. Wanda was a heavy charge to me, for the curse which had fallen upon the mother had descended to the child. She was insane from her birth. The count took no heed of her; he never came near the place, but he paid us handsomely for our care of her, and Mr. Hartmann, through whom the money passed, was exact with the remittances. She grew up to be even lovelier than her mother; there was nothing alarming about her want of reason, and only to look at her no one would have guessed that anything was much amiss with her. She did not look then as she does now; she had a brilliant colour then. In her mind she remained always like a little child; she understood nothing except the simplest things, and was quite unteachable: generally docile, but if anything angered her she would take fits of silence that sometimes lasted long enough to make me uneasy, and occasionally she would have bouts of rage, in which she would beat herself against the walls, and be more like a wild animal than a human creature; but this was never often, and, with the years, grew of less and less frequent occurrence. She was afraid of me, and desired to please me, and she generally obeyed Elizabeth pretty readily

too. Wilhelm she doted upon; they were always playing together, and he seemed to understand her, and to make her understand him, better than any one else. Francis was the only one she did not care at all for; she seemed positively to dislike him, and he was so devoted to her! He was not like William; he was grave and thoughtful, and did not play with her; but he worshipped the ground she trod on; I have seen his eyes fill with tears when she has said, 'Go, go, you ugly Francis!' Nothing that he could do for her ever seemed to touch her, and when he has gone long distances to get her the flowers that he knew she liked, she would take a malicious pleasure either in giving them to William, or in picking them to pieces before his face. It was a very wild life while they all remained young; they passed all their days playing about in the woods, and when suddenly I felt that they were all growing up, and that something must be done, it seemed as if their childhood had slipped away in one single summer's day.

"Francis went back to Altheim; my husband had been an upright man, respected by his neighbours, and the boy found friends there. William had a great turn for music, and we placed him with the organist of a church at Prague, that he might study so as to make it a profession. Francis got a situation with Mr. Hartmann. Elizabeth remained with me to help me with the housekeeping. The only one of the family to whom time brought no change was Wanda; she led the same life as ever, wandering all day about the woods, making garlands, or taming the wild creatures by imitating their different cries. I have often seen her entice the owls down by hooting to them, and she had an odd way of singing in a soft low voice that brought the lizards all round about her to listen. She ran quite wild, but we never felt anxious if she stopped out late; her deficient state was well known; the peasants were all fond of the poor child, and no one would have harmed a hair of her head. The boys came home occasionally to see us, and I began to look forward to those times with sorrow. Francis had grown into a man, and his devotion for Wanda had taken a more serious turn—he was becoming passionately in love with her. I was grieved to see my child suffer; and though I could not have thought for a moment of his marrying this poor senseless girl, I used almost to hate her when I saw how unfeeling, how wantonly unkind and cruel she was to him; he felt it so bitterly, that I was glad when his little holiday was over, and that he went back to his work at Altheim.

"One autumn time, somewhere about the beginning of September, we got a letter from Wilhelm, complaining of illness (fever and pain brought on by having sat in wet clothes), and expressing so strong a desire to see some of us, that I could not help feeling that he must be worse than he stated himself to be. It was always a matter of impossibility to leave Wanda, so, although I was full of apprehension, I deter-

mined upon sending Elizabeth to pass a week with her brother. The letter I got from her when there, only confirmed my own forebodings: she had found him very ill, and he soon became desperately so. He had a severe attack of rheumatic fever, and Elizabeth, young, and unused to sickness, wrote in alarm to implore me to go to her. I was at my wits' end to know what I could do with Wanda during my absence; at last I bethought me of an old schoolfellow of my own, who had lately come to settle in a village about ten miles distant, and on the direct road to Prague; and I made up my mind to leave Wanda there, and get my friend to take charge of her for a week or two, meaning to pick her up on my way home.

"Margaret Hentzel and I had not met since we were girls, but I had heard of her from time to time. She had not had a happy fate: first, a bad husband, then a bad son—a handsome, worthless fellow, who had been an incessant anxiety and heartbreak to her. She was now, like myself, a widow, and her son a soldier in the Austrian service.

"It is a great shock to meet again—aged and broken with the trouble of life—those from whom one had parted in all the freshness and trust of youth. When I had last seen poor Margaret, she was a bright vigorous girl, full of hope and courage; now she was old and worn and feeble, all the bravery gone, and only thankful to be left alone to die in peace after all the misery caused by her husband and her good-for-nothing Karl, who never had anything to recommend him but his looks, and a voice of marvellous power and sweetness, but who, with those two gifts, had contrived to bring sorrow and trouble to many a poor girl's heart. He was at Vienna then, his mother told me, and little did I think, when I kissed Wanda at parting, that it would so soon be given to this man, on whom we had none of us set eyes, to work the terrible mischief that ruined us all. I was detained six weeks by the bed of my sick child, and when at last I hurried back full of anxiety—for I had had no news from Margaret for a considerable time—it was to find Wanda (then but barely sixteen) the wife of this miscreant. He had arrived suddenly soon after my departure, having gambled away every farthing that he possessed, and with the design of extorting what money he could from his poor frightened mother. He saw Wanda; he also saw some jewels which had belonged to her mother, and which I had left with Margaret Hentzel, as an earnest of payment for her trouble; he found out that Wanda belonged in some mysterious way to great and powerful people, and from that moment he conceived the project of marrying her, and never rested until he had so bewildered the poor deficient creature with his beautiful evil face and wondrous voice, and so worked upon the terrors of his helpless old mother, that he induced them to go with him to another place some miles away, where they were totally unknown, and where, after a sojourn of a few days, they were married. After

this he remained but two days with them, at the end of which time he disappeared, carrying the jewels with him, and leaving his hapless child-bride to her fate. I cannot describe my state of mind when I was made aware of all that had happened: indignation at the poor senseless creature's having been taken this base advantage of, and terror at the thought of her father's fury when he should learn what had befallen, alternately possessed me. It seems that Karl had taken leave of his wife by the brink of a lake in the woods near his mother's house, and every day the poor child went and wandered round and round the water like a restless-ghost, calling for him in the most piteous way until night set in, and we had to lure her home with lies, telling her that she would find him at the house, or by the way, or under a tree in the garden waiting for her, deluding the simple creature with hopes never to be fulfilled. Margaret Hentzel was too much paralysed by all that had occurred, to advise or to oppose, and I got my darling Wanda home to Wallendorf as soon as possible; the change of scene and return to the old life seemed to sweep all later events entirely out of her memory. She never mentioned Karl's name again, but she fell into a kind of melancholy stupor. She would not utter, she ate next to nothing, and was worn to a thread; the child looked bewitched; she then gave up going out altogether; she seemed too weak to move; she lost all her colour, and would sit for hours playing with some dead forget-me-nots she had brought away with her from that lake of ill fortune, and which, no doubt, her wicked husband had given her.

"About this time my son Francis obtained a secretary's place with a nobleman at Prague; it was not a very great affair, but still an advance upon his former position. William was quite settled at Prague, so that the two brothers would be together again; and I was glad of that—but most of all I was glad of anything that would remove him entirely away from Wanda. The Sunday before he was to leave for Prague, Francis came out to Wallendorf to bid us good-by. For some time before that last disastrous circumstance he had avoided Wanda as much as possible: her usual greeting had been, 'Go—go—I hate you—you ugly Francis!' and though he was half broken-hearted by it, he bore her no ill will; he knew the poor half-witted creature could not help anything she did—the only misfortune was, that her lovely looks undid her unkind words, and he could no more help loving her than she could help hating him. This evening he came in, and kissed Elizabeth and me as usual; Wanda was sitting at the little table in the window, looking at her dead forget-me-nots. He did not go near her, but just said, 'Good evening, Wanda!' and, passing on, came and stood by the fire. The day had been cold and damp, and we had thrown on a few fagots to make a blaze. Wanda gave him no answer, but looked steadily at him in silence. At last she rose up, came slowly across the room to where he was

standing, and putting both her arms round his neck, laid her little thin white face against his cheek, saying, in her sweet childish way, 'Poor Francis! poor Francis!' It was almost more than he could bear—she had never kissed him in her life before. We were all ready to cry, for it seemed as if some dumb grief at her heart had made her know at last what he suffered; but this new tenderness was the worst thing that could happen for my poor boy, and I looked with impatience to the end of the evening. Early next day he left us.

"We had hardly been settled a month in our old home, when I got a letter from Margaret Hentzel acquainting me with the sudden and awful death of her son. One night, while in a fit of drunkenness, he had fallen from his horse, had struck his head violently against a stone, and had been taken up a corpse. I fell on my knees, and thanked God for what seemed to me an issue out of all our troubles. The count need never know—Wanda would forget—we would bury her terrible secret for ever in a sealed silence—and all might yet be well.

"By degrees Wanda recovered her health and strength, but an extraordinary change had come over her. A sort of soft splendour (I have no other word for it) seemed to rest upon her; there was something new and angelic about her that I had never seen before. Every day she grew more beautiful; her skin so much fairer, her eyes with such a soft tender haze over them! Elizabeth was as much struck with her appearance as I was, for one night she suddenly exclaimed, 'Mother, what ails our Wanda? She has human eyes!' A remark which had its significance, sir, for until then Wanda's eyes had been like the bright, clear, piercing eyes of a bird, and entirely without any touch of human warmth in them. She hardly ever spoke; but though this might not seem to indicate a change much for the better, when she did say anything I was amazed to see how often now there was something that looked almost like a followed-out thought. She became very gentle and caressing, too, which she had never been before, and instead of running wild as she used, she would now try and imitate Elizabeth about the house. At first it was like a little child playing at housewife; but by degrees she got really to do things handily, and to help, and it was pretty to see the poor silly thing try so hard to do her best. When she succeeded, we patted her and praised her, and said, 'Good Wanda!' and she was so happy and so proud! One day at dinner, Elizabeth put a plum down beside me on the table, which a neighbour had left for me. There had been fruit of which the girls had eaten, and this was a small plum which could not be divided; so, while I was talking to Elizabeth about the friend who had sent it me, I ate it up. I had just finished the last morsel, when Wanda suddenly made a savage spring at me, and struck me a violent blow. At first I thought she must be in play; but when I saw her face, I saw it was no play—it was in a state of convulsion. In the same instant, an awful, nameless fear

flashed into my mind, and took possession of it. It was too well founded. In due time, my innocent child, my poor unconscious Wanda, became a mother. On a bright morning in May she brought a lovely boy into the world. Oh, her face of ecstasy when, after those hours of mortal agony, I laid her baby on her breast!

"Lucky, Count Berchtold was still abroad, and I did not know where to write to him. I do not think I should ever have found courage to do so. As for Wanda, Heaven wrought a miracle upon her through her love for her little one. She nursed him with the most doting tenderness, and was never tired of rocking his cradle, and singing and cooing to him. As she nursed him, and as the baby grew, her senses seemed to come back to her, and by the time he was four months old she was hardly different from any other people. But, unfortunately for us, of course this state of things could not endure for ever. Count Berchtold returned to the castle at last, and Joseph Hartmann, to whom I had been obliged to confide our trouble, drove over from Altheim, had an interview with him, and told him what had befallen his hapless child. He was frenzied with rage! He flew to the stable, ordered his horse, and tore off to Wallendorf; Hartmann following at full speed in the carriage, to prevent mischief if possible. Wanda had just set her boy to sleep, and was rocking the cradle and singing. I was mending up one of the baby's night-shirts in the front room; Elizabeth was in the garden, and saw them coming. She ran in to tell me, but she had hardly got the words out, when the count entered, blaspheming with passion.

"'Infamous wretch!' he shouted, 'is this what I have paid you for? Is this the way you discharge your trust? Low-born beggar! Do you know what the honour of a noble name means?'

"At this instant Wanda appeared at the door of the inner room. She came up to him, not knowing in the least who it was. 'Do not be angry,' she said to him, and put her hand upon his arm; 'do not speak so loud. Hush! hush! you will wake my child.'

"The count seized her by both wrists. 'Be silent!' he said, between his teeth, and quivering with rage; 'your child sleeps, does he? I wish both he and you were sleeping the sleep of death in your graves!' He flung her from him, and made for the inner room. Wanda flew like lightning into the room before him, and shut the door against him, while Hartmann, Elizabeth, and I, all stood before the door on the other side, and pushed him from it. It was a frightful scene! He suddenly turned sharp round upon Hartmann: 'Take the accursed little creature away from that shameless idiot!' he said. 'She shall not glory in her degradation any longer! Bring it away with you this moment, as you value your position and my favour.' With that he left the cottage, and rode off again at full gallop.

"How shall I describe all that followed? Our having to break this terrible news to Wanda,

and the poor unfortunate creature's agony when at last she understood that she was to lose her child! She lay down at Hartmann's feet, and begged for mercy. He was crying his eyes out, poor man, but he had a wife and a family of little children, and his place was all he had to depend upon. He waited a long while, but at last he said he could wait no more. I whispered to Elizabeth to get the poor thing out into the garden if possible, that he might take the child while she was away; but anguish seemed to have sharpened all her senses, and she heard me. She stood right up in the midst of us, shaking like a leaf, and said, 'I will fetch my child myself—I will give him my child myself—I will only nurse him once more—and then he shall go.' She went back into her room, and we all remained where we were, talking together in a low voice: we were very miserable! Hartmann was a kind man, and had a baby of his own—it went to his heart to take the child away—but he promised us to ask the count's leave to bring it up with his own, and we thought that, so, the poor mother would often have a chance of seeing it when the count was away. I got up, and went to look what the poor thing was doing; she had got her baby at her breast, and was singing to him as she always did. She looked up and smiled at me as I opened the door. Any amount of sorrow would have been less dreadful than that awful smile. We sat for about another quarter of an hour, and then Hartmann got into his gig, and desired me to fetch the child. I was just going for it, when Wanda came into the room with her baby in her arms; she had wrapped him up in a large shawl, and he was sound asleep. She looked so terrible that it made us speechless; she was as white as marble, and her lips as deathly pale; she walked straight out of the house, looking neither to right nor left, and down the little garden, to Hartmann, who was waiting in his gig at the gate. She handed the child up to him, and he laid it carefully down on the seat by his side. 'Tell him not to wake my child,' she said, with a little laugh, that made my blood run cold. I was standing behind her, and I made a sign to Hartmann to drive off, for I wanted to end this horrible tragedy as fast as possible. He drove away, and Wanda stood as if she were made of stone; when he came to the turn in the road, and went out of sight, she dropped down as if she had been shot. We got her into the house, and put her to bed; before next morning, raging brain-fever had set in. We had sent for the doctor from the village, but he had been called up to attend some one already, and was out. At last I heard wheels, and ran to the door hoping it was he: it was Hartmann, with a face as white as ashes, and I knew something more dreadful yet was to come. My presentiment was unerring. When he had arrived at the castle the day before, and took the baby in his arms, it was cold and dead. The count had sent him now to hunt us out of our home, and out of the country, but we could not go then, for Wanda could not be moved. For weeks

she lay between life and death, and, dearly as I loved her, I often prayed God to end her miserable days, and take her to himself; but it was not to be. She recovered her health at last, but she has always remained of the same ghastly hue that she was when she gave her dead baby into Haßmann's arms, and not one gleam of reason has ever since come to lighten the darkness in her soul. She is quite harmless, but it irritates her if she thinks we watch her; so when she wishes to walk alone, I pretend that I want a drive, and follow slowly in the carriage, so as just to keep her in sight without annoying her; and if she has a fancy to hear music, of which she has always been passionately fond, Elizabeth always takes a place some way off from her, but where she is able to command a view of her, and look after her from a distance. As soon as she was well enough to be moved, we came to England with William; he has got a very good situation as organist at the Catholic chapel close by, and has plenty of lessons besides. The count provided very amply for poor Wanda as long as he lived; and since he died, which is now about four years ago, his heirs have continued the remittances, so I suppose he remembered to mention her in his will."

The old woman's dismal narrative was finished, and she got up to go and see after her daughter. Edward Saville sat like one petrified; the terrible history had stunned him. Presently Madame Hausmann returned, and taking Mr. Saville by the hand, led him into the next room. It was her own sleeping apartment, and divided from another room beyond by a glass door, which had a curtain over it. She signed to him to be silent, and bringing him close to it, drew aside a corner of the curtain. Elizabeth Hausmann was lying on a sofa at the end of the room, and not far from her, on a footstool, sat Wanda, crooning in a low soft voice, and rocking a cradle in which lay a tiny frock. "Lullaby, my little baby; lullaby, my little son!" was the continual burden, repeated over and over again.

"She was much agitated when she saw Elizabeth carried in this morning," said Madame Hausmann, wiping her eyes; "but we can always quiet her by putting the baby's frock into the cradle, and setting her to rock it."

CHAPTER V.

EDWARD SAVILLE woke from his dream another man. It was not that he loved Wanda less, he loved her more; but a strong feeling of humanity, the most intense compassion, had been awakened in his heart, and now coloured the selfishness of his passion; he loved her in another way, and the manifestations of his love were consequently quite different to what they had been before. He sought to win Madame Hausmann with nearly as much perseverance as he had before pursued Wanda, and at last his disinterested zeal disarmed her. In answer to his anxious inquiries on the subject, she told him that her eldest son, Francis, had already had a consultation of eminent physicians upon

Wanda's state in Prague; but that their opinion was, that the case was a hopeless one. Mr. Saville found, however, that no advice had yet been taken for her in England, and he persuaded Madame Hausmann to allow him to bring the best men in London to visit her. But to no purpose; they considered her mental condition as incurable.

When first he became admitted familiarly into the house, Wanda used to be afraid of him. She would not sit down in the room with him, and never would speak while he was there; she fluttered about much as a frightened bird does, and his presence seemed to agitate and make her restless. Luckily, one day, he remembered the adventure of the lilies of the valley, and brought some for her. By degrees, the seeing him continually, and always receiving from him the flowers she was fondest of, tamed her, and she became accustomed and attached to his company.

One morning, Edward found Madame Hausmann busily engaged in reading a letter from Germany; it was from Francis Hausmann, and gave her the account of two wonderful cures that had lately been effected upon persons considered hopelessly insane, by a certain Dr. Wrangel, whose name had become famous throughout Germany in consequence. "Dearest mother," the letter said, "if Wanda could only see him! But he has had a serious illness, and has been ordered to the south for change of climate; he is to pass the winter at Naples, and will not return to Berlin before next spring."

"Poor Francis!" said his mother, "he is never tired of hoping, and in his patient devotion he forgets that all these useless journeys and great doctors cost sums of money that we cannot well afford to waste."

"Why don't you sell Wanda's trinkets, mother? Her famous diamond comb alone would pay for all the expenses of the journey," said Elizabeth; "she, poor thing, neither knows its value, nor where it comes from; one might put a common gilt one in its place, and she would probably like it all the better, for being something new."

"No, no!" said the old woman; "those trinkets belonged to her poor mother, and as long as there is a penny left in the house, they shan't be touched."

"But, good God!" exclaimed Edward Saville, "why don't you make use of my wretched money? Of what earthly good is it lying there at the banker's? Whom does it profit? And why wait for Dr. Wrangel's return to Germany? Whatever is done in cases of this sort, should be done with as little delay as possible. Why not go at once and seek the doctor in Naples?"

The women were quite bewildered by this sudden proposition, and seemed to consider this long immediate journey to a foreign land as a project attended by almost insuperable obstacles; the more so, that it was impossible for William Hausmann to throw up his situation and go with them. But when Edward

told them that of course he intended to accompany them, the thought of having him to manage and interpret for them smoothed away much of the difficulty; and he argued so long and so earnestly, that at last he argued successfully, and carried his point. They got to Naples by the end of July, and upon inquiry found that Dr. Wrangel had left that town for Sorrento, where he had established himself for the summer; thither they followed him without loss of time.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Brande had gone on constantly writing to her cousin, and receiving answers that were but little satisfactory to her; she had an undefined apprehension that all was not going well with him, and at last determined upon coming to town for a month to look after him. As soon as she had settled this little plan with her husband, she wrote up to Edward to take a house for her, and was much surprised, after some days, at getting no answer; but she thought he had perhaps not yet found anything to suit, and that she should hear in a day or two, so she waited patiently. At the end of a week, however, she wrote again, and, still receiving no reply, sent off a line to a friend of his to inquire of his whereabouts. The friend informed her that Edward Saville was not in London. Judge of her astonishment when the post brought her the following letter from Italy:

Hôtel de la Sirène, Sorrento.

Dearest Harty,—The date of this will surprise you. Don't be angry with me, dear. I was too well aware of your sisterly anxiety for me to confide to you a project which I felt sure could meet with but little sympathy or encouragement from you; and so, to avoid the pain which would have been caused to us both, by your unavailing efforts to prevent me from putting what you will consider my Quixotic plan into execution, I have been silent.

Harty, my sister, my dear friend, pity me! The woman to whom my life has been devoted for the last six months is insane, but not hopelessly so, I will trust. There is a famous man here at Sorrento, whom I have brought her to consult; we are to see him to-morrow, and I will let you know the result. Meanwhile, don't let your kind heart be troubled about me; remember how few interests there were in my disjointed homeless existence; even if this venture fails, I am sure you will agree with me, that my idleness and my money could not be better employed than in the service of a fellow-creature so grievously afflicted.

Yours ever affectionately,

E. S.

Upon arriving at Sorrento, Edward Saville's first care had been to find out where Dr. Wrangel was domiciled. By a piece of great good luck, there was an apartment to let in the same house; he took it at once, and immediately established Wanda with the Hausmanns in it, remaining himself at the Hôtel de la Sirène, which was close by. Dr. Wrangel had an interview with Wanda the day after her arrival, but would give

no opinion about her until he had seen more of her. She was very quiet, and seemed perfectly happy; her great delight was to sit the whole day long by the sea-side, and in the evening they often went out in a boat; Wanda liked nothing so much. The monotony seemed to calm and soothe her, and the place altogether agreed well with her. Their boatman on these excursions was a fisherman of the name of Benedetto; he had a wife and a child, for whom Wanda had conceived a violent affection. One evening, soon after their arrival, on their return from one of these boating expeditions, they found Stella sitting on the shore playing with her child. When they landed, she got up to speak to Benedetto with the boy in her arms. He was a magnificent fellow, nearly two years old, and the whole party surrounded him, and began noticing and admiring him, to the great delight of the young mother. Madame Hausmann and Elizabeth both offered to take him, but he would go to neither, and suddenly stretched out his arms to Wanda, who was still standing looking into the water, which seemed to have an eternal fascination for her, and not heeding him. Stella took him up to her, and put him into her arms; the weather was very warm, and she wore a low dress with a light shawl just thrown over her shoulders; in taking the child her shawl fell off, and the little fellow, whose mother had not yet weaned him, instantly pressed his tiny fat hands upon the fair uncovered breast, and, after patting it two or three times, put his little face down and kissed it. Some strange echo out of the past was suddenly awakened by the touch of those small fingers, and the poor thing fainted dead away. From that hour she was quite devoted to the little Aniello; she seemed unable to live out of his sight, and they passed whole days together playing on the shore, the kind-hearted Stella never grudging her darling to the poor bereaved creature who had attached herself to him so passionately.

In about a fortnight after the receipt of the letter we have already mentioned, and which had thrown Mrs. Brande into a state of considerable anxiety, she received another epistle from her cousin, which caused her the deepest distress; it was as follows:

Dearest Harty,—Dr. Wrangel has now seen my poor Wanda continually during a whole fortnight, and from his knowledge of her antecedents, and after the most patient and constant scrutiny, his opinion is that she might possibly recover if she were to marry and have children. It is the only chance, but it is one. Don't be frightened, dear. I am not married yet, and it is still quite uncertain if I ever shall be; at all events, I give you my word that I will do nothing precipitately, or without letting you know beforehand. Yours ever affectionately,

E. S.

Harty Brande carried this letter in floods of tears straight to her husband. "William, he is going to marry that mad woman; you must take

me to Naples to-morrow," said she; and, though they did not go the next day, they did the next week, and the week after that saw them safely landed at Naples, from which place Mrs. Brande immediately despatched a note to her cousin telling him of their arrival, and desiring him to be quite enchanted with this little surprise, and to show his delight by coming off early the next day to see them.

The first thing next morning Edward Saville set out for Naples. On his way, he stopped at the Hausmanns' door, and saw Elizabeth.

"I shall be back by six o'clock at latest," he said, "so wait for me until then; but if by any impossible chance I should be delayed, don't balk Wanda of her boating. Isn't she up?"

"She is up," answered Elizabeth, laughing, "but not dressed yet. Yesterday, she saw you kiss the little grey stocking I work at, and we can't persuade her to put on her own this morning. When, after a thousand useless entreaties, I attempted to slip on the white one, she whisked it out of my hand as cleverly as she once did that nosegay of yours, and flung it right out of window. I ran to pick it up, and when I came back again I found her trying hard to get her foot into my work in the midst of all the needles, and saying to herself all the time, 'Edward loves you, little stocking!'"

His colour rose slightly. "Do you believe that she really cares at all for me?" he asked.

"In her incomplete way she does," was the answer. "I am sure she will miss you more than once to-day, for instance; but she is so uncertain. I don't think she has what may be called a settled, dependable affection for anybody in the world except my mother and Stella's boy. She perfectly dotes upon Aniello; if anything were to happen to the child I think it would kill her. The doctor says that hers is the most remarkable and powerful development of maternal instinct that he has ever come across, and he is quite delighted at it; he declares that in things which concern the child he has already observed a decided reawakening of her intellect, and has desired that she may be with the boy as much as possible; he thinks it likely to have a very beneficial influence upon her mind."

"I am sorry not to see her," said Edward; "I had thought just to bid her good-by."

"And so you shall. Wait a minute, and she shall bid you good-by out of the window."

She ran up-stairs, and presently Wanda's fair head appeared at the casement.

"Say good-by to him, dear, prettily, he is going away," said Elizabeth, who was just over her shoulder.

"Good-by, dear Edward. Don't go away, dear Edward!" said Wanda.

"I shall be with you again before six," said Edward Saville from below. "Good-by, my darling!"

"Good-by, my darling! good-by, my darling!" she repeated, in her child's voice.

As she leaned out to look at him, a full-blown rose that was in her bosom, bruised against the

window-frame, fell in a shower of fresh leaves upon his face.

It had been a cloudless day, and was a heavenly evening. Towards half-past six o'clock a fresh breeze had sprung up, and Benedetto's boat might be seen dancing along upon the crisp sparkling wavelets. Edward Saville had not come back, and Stella, Wanda, and the boy, put out to sea to enjoy the delicious change in the weather. Elizabeth Hausmann declined accompanying them; she was always ill unless it was a dead calm, so they left her sitting on the shore under the shadow of a great rock, knitting away indefatigably at the grey stocking. Wanda had been fidgety and restless the whole day; they did not know if she missed Edward Saville, but something seemed wanting to her. When she got into the boat, she said "Good-by, good-by," once or twice to herself, and looked disturbed; to quiet and amuse her, Stella put the child into her arms, and she began her usual game of trying to hush him to sleep. "Lullaby, my little son!" she sang to him, and nestled him in her bosom, but the boy was full of life and spirits, and would not be put to sleep at any price. He got at her comb, and, pulling it out, let all her long hair loose. It was pretty to see them romping, and kissing, and struggling together, this dark, rosy Hercules of a boy and the gentle pale lady with all her fair hair streaming. Stella was trying in vain to imprison the little hands, which were making desperate clutches at Wanda's hair, while Benedetto lay on his oars and laughed to see them; and the boat danced gaily over the short wavelets that had become crimson under the crimsoning sky, and Capri loomed in the distance like an island of Paradise in the glory of that evening sunlight. Presently, Wanda lowered her hand into the water and sprinkled the boy to make him leave go; his mother held him by his frock, as, with a shout of delight, he hung over the side of the boat, and dipping his little, round, firm, brown arm into the sea, dashed a handful of sparkling water up into Wanda's face; it soon became a pitched battle. The little fellow was in a state of frantic excitement, laughing, shrieking, and splashing them all, when suddenly he made a violent unexpected spring, the frock slipped from between his mother's fingers, and he fell into the water. Uttering one wild sharp cry, Wanda plunged in after him.

"My child! my child! Oh, holy mother of mercy, save my child!" screamed the agonised mother.

Benedetto made at once for the floating body, seized it just as it was sinking for the second time, and swam safely back with it to the boat.

The sun had gone down, when a dusty carriage drove up to the door of the Sirena, and a lady jumped out, assisted by Edward Saville.

"How lovely it has been," said a pleasant-toned English voice, "and how sorry I am William couldn't come. Just run in, Edward dear, will you, and arrange with the man for me; a bedroom and a small sitting-room is all I shall

want, and I'll wait down here till you come back. I positively must see her to-night."

See her!

As Harty Brande stood looking up the street, a woman came wildly running past her, weeping bitterly, and followed by two or three half-naked urchins; some way further on, under the deep orange and purple of that solemn southern twilight, a crowd of people were hurrying along, vociferating loudly, with excited gestures, and pale awe-struck faces. "Ah, povera signorina! Ah Madonna mia! Che disgrazia!" cried the women. Mrs. Brande saw that something dreadful must have happened; but she did not understand Italian, and waited impatiently for her cousin to come out to her. Suddenly, from the midst of the shuffling, irregular footsteps of the rabble, the rhythmical tramp of men walking in step together could be distinguished. She pressed forward—in the centre of the crowd, stretched on a litter borne by four men, lay a slender woman's body; the face was covered with a handkerchief, the body was swathed in long masses of dripping fair hair. One of the two men who passed nearest to her bearing this sad burden, was a tall, brawny fisherman, who had evidently just come out of the water, and who was sobbing as if his heart would break. Hurrying after him came a little scared mother, holding a rosy boy pressed tight against her breast, from whose short, coal-black hair, soaked into points, large bright drops of water kept falling.

When, after saving his child, Benedetto had had time to think of Wanda, it was too late—life was extinct.

One evening, when Edward Saville was a little better, his cousin had his sofa wheeled out on the terrace overlooking the sea. He was still very weak, but all danger was over; he had now only to get strength, and, as soon as he had managed this, they had all settled to go on to Malta and pay his sister a visit.

Mr. Brande was busy over his Galignani, Harty had got her sketch-book, and Edward was looking out upon that cloudless sky and waveless sea, and thinking of the strange storm that had passed over his life. The Hausmanns had gone back to Germany, the sea that had robbed him of his beloved was lying without a ripple at his feet—it was all gone like a dream. Waking up from the dead blank of his bed of sickness, he might almost have thought it one, but for two or three withered rose-leaves which hung in a tiny black case round his neck.

Harty saw where his thoughts were wandering, and brought her sketch for him to look at: he took it, and laid it down listlessly beside him.

"You must positively be shaved to-morrow, Edward," she said to him; "I think I have acquitted myself wonderfully in the arrangement of your hair" (she had washed his face and combed his hair for him, herself, before he had come out), "but shaving is more than I feel competent to undertake. There," she con-

tinued, unfastening a looking-glass from the lid of her work-box, and giving it to him, "what do you think you look like?"

He took the glass, and looked at himself in it.

"Almost like a man with a story," he said, with a sad smile, as he gave it back to her. "Harty, did it ever occur to you that if I had not chanced to misread a word of four letters in one of your notes, none of this would have happened?"

From Malta they went on to Egypt, carrying along with them young Mrs. Monckton, Edward Saville's sister: she was a true-hearted, affectionate little woman, and it was very good for him to have her about him. By degrees his wounds healed, and life closed over his great grief as the waters had closed over the body of his beloved, covering the ruin with an untroubled surface. He is not perhaps so happy as Mrs. Brande—but few people are. On the whole, I dare say he is as contented as most of us.

BACKWOODS LIFE IN CANADA.

How well I remember the morning my brother Paul left Grassville for his lot of land in "the Heavy Timbers." Everybody would call our home Grassville, though we struggled long and hard for Graceville. However, when the nickname got into the Gazetteer, we gave it up. Paul was a fine, strong, English-built fellow, five feet eight inches high, with a ruddy complexion, and life in his eyes. His brown hair curled, his lips were loving like a girl's, and he was what is called "a mother's boy." There is no better recommendation for a young man. His dress was striped home-made cloth, indigo blue and white, made in the form of a blouse, with wide pantaloons, over which were drawn long leather boots. The blouse had a square collar, which was turned back, and revealed a fine, white, and very neatly-made shirt. I made it, though "I say it who should not say it." The blouse was confined at the waist by a black leather belt. A very full knapsack, with a blanket strapped outside, a very bright rifle and axe, completed the accoutrement of the traveller. He walked as if his nerves were perfectly tempered steel springs, and as though all means of locomotion were contemptible save those included in himself. He was going to his farm in the woods, or rather to his "lot of land," which was to become a farm when it was cleared and brought under cultivation. When he had walked twenty miles he came to Woodville. His place lay beyond, in the nameless region known as "the Heavy Timbers." The hard wood and heavy growth frightened many, but tempted my "live brother," as we used to call him. As he passed on his way, he came to a house in the outskirts of a hamlet, consisting of a saw and grist mill, a clothing mill, and five or six dwellings. Paul was hungry—he was a genuine hero, but heroes get hungry like ordinary mortals. At the edge of a slope, a

little before he came to the house, was a spring, and "a dear pretty girl" was filling a bright tin pail with the crystal water. Whether the sight of the young lady intensified Paul's hunger I cannot say, but he resolved to get his dinner at the next house, for hotels were unknown then in this region. He had bread and cheese in his pack, still he had a fancy to rest and dine. He knocked at the door of the wayside dwelling, a cheerful voice said "Come in," and he entered a neat, large, square room. Two girls—almost as pretty as the one he had seen at the spring—were spinning; one was spinning woollen rolls, the other cotton roping. In each case the material was reduced by machinery to a roll about as thick as the little finger of the spinner. The wheels occupied one side of the room, on another a man was making shoes, and at a front window a worn, faded, but ladylike woman with failing sight was mending boys' clothes. It was a sad fact that the boys of this family were something of the nature of a nuisance. The neighbours said the father did not like to give them his own trade, for he felt above it himself. Certain it is, they were not trained to useful work, but were sometimes made to do "chores." They were imprisoned in school in winter, and they "raised Cain" the year round. They tore their pantaloons bird-nesting, they made "elbow room" by holes in the sleeves of their jackets, they went swimming in dark deep pools in Black River, and they were anything but "a real blessing to mothers."

In the country where openings alternate with forests, and a village has six dwellings, a traveller is a sort of irregular newspaper. Everybody is glad to see somebody, when somebody seldom comes along. There is life in the grasp of a stranger's hand in the monotony of forest life. Paul was made to feel at home at once. The family of Mr. Joseph Jones soon learned that he was from Grassville, that he was the son of his father, who was a man of mark among the settlers, and that he was going to "the Heavy Timbers" to take up and clear a hundred-acre lot. The girls were not frightened that he was going alone. They even promised to come and see him in sugar time, as they were only seven miles from his opening that was to be, and there were blazed trees to mark the way, so one of the boys could pilot them.

"But I will come for you," Paul said, gallantly. Mrs. Jones looked a little more worn and weary as the young people talked it over, and said what "good fun it would be." Poor lady! she had made just such a beginning with her husband twenty years since. She had helped him clear a good many acres, but he was not persevering. They had sold out years ago, and he had "taken up" several kinds of business. For the last years he had worked at shoemaking. This he had also "taken up," which means, that he had never learned the trade. He was clever, this Joseph Jones; but there was sorrow in that home, and he caused it. The gentler neighbours said, "What a pity such a clever man should be unsteady!" The bolder

and less kind said, "What a shame that such a man should drink." He was not an habitual, daily drunkard, but at all raisings, log-rollings, at Christmas, and in all times of illness and trouble, Mr. Jones was sure to be "in liquor," so as to be useless. This terrible unreliability had broken his wife's spirit, had almost broken her heart, and at forty she was wrinkled, grey, and prematurely old. Some thought books and a superior education had spoiled Mr. Jones; others said more books, a Lyceum, an agricultural association, and competing for prizes, would have saved Joseph Jones. But he was not saved, and his family were not blessed in him as they should have been in a man of his education and ability.

An hour's talk, a nice dinner, and the smiles of these pretty girls, set Paul vigorously on his way. Did he steal anything in that home? He took something away with him which he never returned, and which he hid as carefully as if it were a theft. Why is it that the first consciousness of affection leads us to conceal? There is one name that we never can utter freely and cheerfully, though the sound of it thrills the heart with delight, even though it be Smith, Brown, or Jones. Paul took away a great deal from that wayside house, with its large square working-room, and its various workers. Carefully as he concealed what he took, I have an inventory of all. First, a pair of bright blue eyes; next, a great lot of golden curls; then red cheeks, rosy lips, and a form full of springing grace. Emily had a wreath of trailing arbutus in her hair, though it was June, and the blossom is always called the May flower. In this northern region this most beautiful and fragrant bloom is seldom seen till June. Paul carried away the wreath with the sunny curls, and to this day he has a special tenderness for trailing arbutus. Cheerily and lightly he went his way with his hidden treasures to his lot in the heart of "the Heavy Timbers," and he did not sleep that night till he had explored a good deal. Laying his pack down on a good dry camping-knoll, he took his rifle and threw it up in the air, and caught it as it came down, many times in merry play that night, because his heart was full of companionship. He found a hill-side against which to build his camp, and the early morning shone on him with axe and shovel, hard at work clearing a space for his shanty. His shovel had a sheet-iron blade, and he had carried it in his pack with some screws, which helped him to fit a wooden handle—holes having been drilled for the screws. Before noon the hill was partially dug away, and posts set with crotched tops to hold poles, on which a thatched roof of birch-bark and hemlock-boughs was to be laid. When this was done, Paul shot a partridge. When it was dressed, he broiled it. Perhaps he smoked it a little, but, with bread and salt from the pack, it made an excellent dinner. He then peeled birch and gathered hemlock-boughs, and, before he slept, he had a comfortable camp. He was much happier alone, with the angel in his heart, the owner of the sunny curls,

than he could have been in a log-house at the next opening. He had sundry adventures in his forest solitude. He cleared his land, leaving a knoll for his house, and he left some grand old forest trees in the places where he would have set them had not nature forestalled his labour of love. Trees to most of the settlers were only enemies, to be got rid of. They spared none but the maples, for sugar. Paul left groves of young trees, though it cost him much care in burning. Others turned the growth of ages, and which none can recal to shade the naked land, into ashes, and then into salts, and then into money. Paul had his time of making salts, a time of tiresome and profitable interest, but his beautiful home at this day is embellished with a glory of trees.

One Sunday morning Paul was getting ready to go to church at Woodville—notwithstanding the common property in the curls and other treasures, he felt more as if he had them when he saw them in church—this morning he made a kettle of maize meal mush for his breakfast, and set it out of doors to cool, while he shaved, for no one was hirsute in those days who was within hailing distance of civilisation. Presently he heard a series of horrid grunts, and, looking out, he saw a bear who had put his head into the kettle of mush without leave, and who was caught by the tail falling over the back of his ears; the tail having been accidentally left upright. As Bruin was trapped, Paul split his head with his axe, and had enough to do that day to dress the carcase. No doubt Emily was disappointed in not seeing him at church, and Paul was disappointed in having plenty of bear's grease, a barrel of salted meat for winter, and a grand bear-skin for his bed.

Day after day our hero went on felling trees, burning them to ashes, and then, with a leach tub made of a hollow log, he leached his ashes, and he boiled away the ley in a huge cast-iron caldron kettle, and made salts. Salts are always silver to the settler. The land is cleared of trees, when this money is earned, and gold comes of the rich cleared lands of this part of Canada.

He built a house of hewn logs, and the neighbours helped him to roll it up, when the time came, and then he put a neat paling around a goodly space for a garden, with the house in the centre. His fence, the first of the kind in that region, was made by driving sharpened poles into the ground. Next spring he planted scarlet runners, and his fence became highly ornamental when it was festooned all over with vines in bloom.

He planted currant-bushes, and strawberries, plum-trees, and even rose-bushes, among the great black stumps. He went on for a year improving his farm, and dreaping of an Emily for his Eve, all that time, without saying a word to the young lady. He had seen her at church, and he had called at her home, but he had never

found opportunity to speak of his love or his hope. At last, with his cage built, he determined to try to catch his bird. One bright morning he found himself in Woodville, and not alone, for the people were all smartly dressed, and out in the street. Paul asked a lad where the people were going, and he said, "To the wedding, be sure."

"Where?"

"At Mr. Joe Joneses."

Paul gasped out, "Which of the girls is going to be married?"

"Why, the prettiest one, be sure." The boy starting to run lest he should miss the show.

Paul sank down on a rock by the wayside. What cared he now for his pretty hewn log-house, with real glass windows, twelve seven by nine panes in each. What cared he for pole paling, scarlet runners, rose-bushes, and fruit, and great trees, and groves of trees, and sugar orchard? His Eve was lost to him. The bears might eat him, instead of the hasty pudding, if it pleased their appetite to do so.

He sat still in his misery, till the thought struck him that he ought to go on and wish the happy couple joy. Like a good generous youth he rose, and with a sad heart and faltering steps he entered the house of feasting. The clergyman had just married the couple, and was making a long prayer for their happiness, when Paul found himself at the door of "the best room" in Mr. Jones's square house, which no one ever dreamed of calling a cottage. The happy couple were standing together looking what is called *cheap*. Their awkward and sheepish appearance made the joyful revelation to Paul that the bride was Miss Scrapphina Elvira, and not Miss Emily Letitia Jones. How Paul wooed his Emily, or how happily she was won, I can hardly tell. Years have gone by since that happy wedding. Sons and daughters have grown in my brother's home. That faded mother has lived many years with Emily, a setting sunbeam upon her children and her grandchildren. Though she is sixty years old, she is fairer and fresher than she was twenty years ago. It is sad to think that the kindest thing Joseph Jones ever did for his wife and children was to die. The bird-nesting out-at-elbow boys took warning by their father, and all came to good. There are no *heavy timbers* now, but one of the finest farming counties in Canada occupies their site.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER XVI. THE VIEW OF A MAN OF THE WORLD.

"WHAT! Fermor?" Repeated after a second pause; the speaker's face halting the while between his habitual laugh and lagging frown. "—And Violet?" Violet had moved a little apart on the sofa; but Fermor, who always looked on these little crises as so many openings for mental training, determined that there should be no awkwardness. Why, indeed, should there be? A man of the world was present.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Hanbury," he said. "The first evening I have got out. And my first visit has been to the charitable friends who took me in, after my stupid blundering accident."

Hanbury was glowing all over, and looking excitedly from one to the other of the two faces. But the last words of Fermor recalled to him certain obligations, as indeed their speaker had artfully intended they should, and checked some unmeaning and perhaps wild speech he was about to make.

"They are waiting for you," he said, bluntly and even roughly, "down at the beach. Shall I tell them that you can't come?"

"Yes, yes," she said, timorously. "I can't go to-night; I have a headache. I don't care to walk."

Fermor rose to go. "It is too late even for me. I laugh at myself, but am obliged, in spite of myself, to be an invalid, and take all manner of ridiculous precautions about my health. We can go part of the way together. Miss Manuel and I have been improving each other. I have been teaching her some of my morbid philosophy."

The two went out together, and so this rather extraordinary interview ended. At the door, Hanbury stopped abruptly, and, in a gauche, almost rough tone, said, "I am going this way. Very sorry, but I have an appointment."

"Good gracious!" said Fermor, gaily, "keep it. Don't think of it. I shall get home very well; not quite an old man yet."

"Such a boor!" he thought to himself; "a true navvy!" And he walked along, smiling

to himself, and thinking almost with delight of his "consummate acting" in the little piece of that evening. "Charming little creature she is!" he said, half aloud. "There is really something bewitching about her. If that stupid lout had not come in, she would have told me everything about herself. I knew what she was coming to." Then he thought perhaps it was as well the lout had come in, for that confidence might have led on to "a business." "I believe I could wind her round my finger," thought Mr. Fermor, as he entered his room. "Confiding little angel!"

These speculations entertained him a great part of the evening. As usual, he got out his little theatre, lit up his castle in Spain, and put himself down walking among the grounds with the little Spanish girl upon his arm. Good old family, he dared to say. Money, he dared to say also. After all, a man must settle down some time or other. Then changing the scene to an inner room in the castle in Spain, he saw himself as lecturer, preacher, teacher, moulding this soft mind to his own pattern—a delightful occupation. So he worked the idea through a whole little play, and then—thinking of the earthly creatures down at the barracks, whose ideas were centred in a pipe—contrasted his own intellectual day's labour with theirs, and thought of going to bed.

They came to tell him there was a gentleman below who wished to see him—Mr. Hanbury. Fermor did not relish this visit. "Really, at this hour," he said, "Come, I suppose, repentant. These bores are always as ready to humble themselves as well as to offend. Show him up."

Hanbury walked in heavily—stalked in the word—but had scarcely the bearing of a penitent.

"I am sorry," he said, "to come in on you at such an hour, but the fact is, I could not have slept without seeing you. A great deal has happened since I left you this evening, and—"

Fermor, though he had shut up his theatre for the night, threw open the doors again with alacrity. The excited "lout" would afford him a little afterpiece before going to bed.

"Sit down, do," he said. "The hour is a little unusual, and I will ask you not to stay very long: an invalid, you know. Well, about this horse, eh? You are coming to that?"

Hanbury sat down mechanically, and looked

at him. "Horse! no!" he said, impatiently. "You *know* what I mean, and what I am going to say; you know you do. What is the use of this affectation of carelessness? I am tired of it. I want to speak very seriously."

"As seriously as you please," said Fermor; "but, I hope, with quietness and decency. Excuse my saying so. Indeed, if I did not know that you are one of those honest sincere natures that *must* say what they think, I assure you I should," and he paused for a little and smiled, "I should ring for a candle and go to bed."

"Not till you have listened to me," said the other, standing up excitedly. "We were very happy till *you* came, and she liked me—and it—it—was all—settled almost. And now it is all changed, and I am convinced you have something to do with it. You know in your conscience you have, Fermor!"

"What logic!" said Fermor, smiling almost contemptuously. "But I suppose I am to understand you are alluding to the second Miss Manuel?"

"Yes, yes," said the other.

"Well, all I can say, Mr. Hanbury, is," said Fermor, "you astonish me!"

"But that is not it," said the other, stopping before him still more excitedly; "you are evading the question—purposely evading it—you know you are."

"But it *is* the question, excuse me," said Fermor, very coldly. "Here is a person with whom I have but the pleasure of a very slight acquaintance, but whom I trust I shall come to know better, comes bursting in on me at scarcely a visiting hour, pours out a torrent of reproaches about a young lady being changed, and says I know it, and can't deny it. What is *it*, pray? Well, if I *do* know and don't deny it? Really this is what I must call very childish. Now do, as a favour, sit down again and tell me what it is you want, or what you complain of; and let us talk rationally."

Hanbury, very much sobered by this speech, did sit down, awkwardly, after a second's hesitation.

"Now listen to me," said Fermor, "for I will reason with you. But as we have got so far in the matter, we may as well finish with it to-night. A lady you admire has suddenly changed towards you. Very well; what have I to do with that?"

"Exactly!" said Hanbury. "Now we are coming to the point. It is very hard. It was all settled. And we were so happy, and—and—Why did you do it? 'I never injured you,' he added, piteously.

"Not intentionally," said Fermor, smiling. "But, still reasoning with you (for to another man I would say at once, 'Sir, you have no business to bring *me* to account'), I ask you again, what have I to do with it, having been shut up here for three weeks? Do you suppose, because a young girl, who has seen as little of the world as a nun, grows a little cold, that you are to go about from house to house venting

your grief? Really, I must say, for the lady's sake, it is scarcely——"

Hanbury, who felt like a great fish in a great net, feeling his helplessness, and, perhaps, some truth in what had been said to him, now struck out wildly, as it were. "I can't talk with you, Mr. Fermor," he said; "I have no gifts that way. But this must be settled one way to-night. I want to know what you mean to do."

"Mean to do!" said Fermor. "That is a wide question."

"It is far too important a matter to be quibbled away in this fashion," said Hanbury. "You know what I mean."

"To save time," said Fermor, "and supposing that I do catch your meaning, suppose me to do as you say I have done; or rather, what would you have me do?"

"Give her up—yes, to speak plainly, give her up. I know you are superior in many ways. You have been in the world, and know how to manage these things. Can't you find some of the fine court ladies—they are more suited to you? Do, and leave me her."

"I see it is hopeless," said Fermor. "In fact, it is so very delicate a subject to discuss, and if I were to speak freely on the matter, it would not be respectful to our common friends. If you mean by 'giving up' to cut off visits, or make any ridiculous marked exposé of the kind, I decline to do so at once. It is much better to be candid, you know. I can't afford to get into an absurd position for anybody."

Hanbury looked at him hopelessly and helplessly. "If I *might* suggest anything," continued Fermor, "I should say the proper manly course would be to exert yourself, and go in regularly and win back your position. You know the old saying about women having to be won."

"I see," said Hanbury. "I understand at last. But don't be too confident, Mr. Fermor. I know I am rough, and can't show off in a drawing-room; but still I believe that honesty and manliness will always have some sort of weight of their own. We shall see how it will turn out. I will take your good advice, though I believe it was not meant to be taken."

"You're quite a privileged being here!" said Fermor.

"I won't detain you longer," said Hanbury; "but I see my way. I may know little of women, but I should scorn to find *my* amusement, or feed *my* vanity in what they call 'Conquest.' I should prefer trying to save them from such a cruel fate."

"With all my heart," said Fermor, rising and taking the candle; "a very proper rôle, which I quite envy you. But let me tell you it requires some gifts—something more than the mere will. You may break down."

"Never!" said Hanbury, turning to go.

"We shall see," said Fermor. "Well, we have agreed on something. And now will you let me ask a favour?—only one—which is, not to let us have any childish pettishness before

other people. It is *so* absurd. 'Let dogs delight,' you know, but not men of the world, grown up like you and me. There, good night."

"Upon my word," he said, as he lay his head on his pillow that night, "this is getting more and more exciting every minute. It is like a play. I am almost sorry I gave him that bit of advice. Poor soul! I shall beat him easily."

CHAPTER XVII. DISCOVERY OF A "TRUE GENTLEMAN."

FERMOR's days went by tediously enough, solaced, indeed, by but little company and the "potted meats" of Mudie, with which he was victualled steadily. In what was to be seen, however, from his back window he began to take a growing interest. Every day there was the same little scene, which he watched, himself unseen, the chair brought out, the cushions, the invalid daughter, with a face that would have been charming to look on if lit up with the colours of health, and the grim, rigid father, trying to bend his stern economy into the gentle offices of nurse. On him Fermor looked with repugnance. He was a mere "day-labourer" in manners, but still even in *that* class there were the family virtues sometimes strongly developed. With this salvo—a sort of apology made to his nicer feelings—he could indulge himself in looking on, and, curiously enough, began to find an interest that increased day by day in the companionship of these figures—for to him they were no more. He would have given a great deal to "find out something" about them. But he could not bring himself down to the familiarity of questioning his man, though he knew that the "man" enjoyed almost the friendship of the "woman" next door.

On the evening before he went out of hospital, as it were, a letter was brought in to Fermor, in a stiff, broken hand, that looked like a bit of iron paling. "A bill," said Fermor. "How they do persecute one." He opened it, and read with some surprise:

"Sir,—I called on you lately about a dog which kept my daughter awake a good part of the night. When I waited on you, I assumed, both from your appearance (excuse my saying so), as well as from the way in which I have always found such remonstrances are received by men, that the mere fact of *requiring* the dog to be removed would offend your *pride*, and that you would therefore meet me with a hostile and impracticable tone. I thought, then, the best way would be to anticipate and prevent, by a sort of firmness, any such reception.

"The thing was too serious to be trifled with. I have but one daughter in the world, who, after a life of roughness and trouble, has become a life to me. We had thought her in a decline; but this place has been the first where she has shown any signs of mending. Naturally I felt anxious,

and spoke more strongly than, perhaps, was necessary. I see I made a mistake, and that I was speaking to a gentleman. I have never apologised to any man, and never shall to any man, but, at my daughter's request, I beg to thank you, which I omitted to do, for your so kindly anticipating our wishes.

"I am, Sir, yours,
"JOHN CARLAY."

Though there was an unpleasant taste about this, still Fermor was somehow pleased with it. He turned it over and over. "An original," he said. "I said so from the first"—this was scarcely true—"and yet there is decidedly something of the gentleman about him" (which, perhaps, lay in that recognition of the gentleman in *him*). "Very odd," he went on, and thought how curiously true blood thus always impressed everybody. He went to his little writing-case, and, on delicate paper decorated at the top with two letters which seemed to be embracing or wrestling, he wrote a coldly polite acknowledgment.

(C.F.)

"Captain Fermor begs to acknowledge, &c."

Then he recollected that the other had written to him in the first person; "an ill-bred thing," no doubt, but still, it would look like "ungentlemanly" insolence to freeze him up with an answer in the third. "Now," said he, tearing it up, "that is just what Forsyth, or Showers, or Cadby, or any of those fellows down there would do."

He knew better, and began again:

(C.F.)

"Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter. I am very glad that the misapprehension under which you laboured has been removed. I fancy you will always find that a *true* gentleman will be ready to anticipate any request, so reasonable as the one you made, especially when a lady's health or wishes are concerned.

"I am, Sir, yours truly,
"CHARLES FERMOR."

In his present condition of monotony, this little incident was something to think over with interest. He even read again, pretty often, his answer to the "day-labourer's" production, and thought, nothing could be more nicely turned. He even fancied himself speaking these sentiments coldly and calmly. It seemed to him the skilful French fencer gracefully parrying with a frail rapier the rough clumsy stroke of a sabre. It was all sleight of hand, and he looked down at his pale woman-like fingers, and thought how it was that good breeding and gentility helped them to wield that social rapier—the pen.

A couple of days later, when Fermor was

quite given back to the world (only he had been recommended to stay in his lodgings on account of the "good air"), he met Major Carter on the road, leaning, more for affection's sake than support, on his son's arm. "So glad to see you," said Major Carter, with his airiest smile of encouragement. "You are looking much better, but not quite restored as yet, I can see. Delicate about here," said the major, putting his hand on his own face. "No wonder, I declare. And how are you now?"

"You never came to see me," said Fermor. "I assure you I should have been glad to have seen you. I had no one to tell me the news of the place, or anything."

Not in the least affected by this candid confession of motives, Major Carter replied hastily, "Very good of you. Shall I tell you the reason? Somerset here knows it as well as I. I said it to him only yesterday at breakfast. Fact was, I know you would be worried with visits, perhaps with having to talk when you were not in the humour, or have even to listen when you were dying to be rid of us. Indeed, I passed the other night, and saw that man that has the horse—Crawford or Hanbury, whatever his name is—coming out. After that, I felt it would scarcely have been fair."

Fermor smiled. There was a good deal of the gentleman about this major, after all.

"By the way," said the latter, "I knew it would be no use asking you; yet if I did not mention it, it would look naturally very strange. But we are having some friends coming to us to-morrow night, in the French way."

Fermor began to contract sensitively. Here was this man trying to fasten an intimacy on him. "I rarely go to parties; never, in fact," he said, coldly.

"So I said to Somerset this morning. In one sense it is scarcely worth asking you. It was for the Prices—old friends of yours—the Prices of Bletchley."

"What! are they here?" said Fermor.

"Yes, they came when you were sick. Sir Charles Honyman, the two Campbells, the Mauuels, Mr. Butler our new clergyman, and a few more."

"If I can manage it," said Fermor, in a ruminating sort of way, "I'll try and look in. You see, I must take care of myself now."

"To be sure," said the major. "We'll leave it in that way. I'm ashamed to ask a Town man to such a thing, and yet I suspect those manufacturing people, the Slacks, who are giving their sumptuous ball next week—a blaze of vulgar splendour—will not get you to go to them. Tell me if I have guessed right? I know I am only the merest acquaintance of yours, scarcely that, indeed; but I am sure I have judged you right."

Fermor smiled, a little pleased at this compliment. "Well, finery," he said, "is scarcely my line. Give me ladies and gentlemen, and let them give their parties in a barn, if they like."

"Capital! very good, very good indeed!" said the major. "Ah, Somerset," he continued, sadly shaking his head. Which, though a little vague, somehow did convey to Fermor that there had been a design of taking him for a model, but that it was now plainly hopeless to imitate him.

"An odd thing, too, you will say," the major went on. "I have asked that strange man next door to you, the stiff gaunt man—Carlay."

"Rather a bear," said Fermor, thinking of his own experience of him. "Yet a something—I don't know how, but really there is something of the gentleman about him."

"How singular!" said the major, with admiration. "Somerset, what was our conversation this morning?"

The youth only elevated his eyes—as if the coincidence passed all speech.

"Ah, you see! Why, I confess I am ashamed. My first judgment was that he was *no* gentleman. He wanted the air, you understand. But since, I have heard all about him. A most singular history. A good family gone astray, and all that sort of thing. It is *very* odd. Do you know, Captain Fermor, I envy you that instinct of yours."

"Yes," said Fermor, with quiet superiority; "I think I am pretty well up in *that* sort of thing. I can't be taken in easily—not easy to pass off plating on me for silver."

As he went home, Fermor owned to himself that that Carter was a well-bred sort of person, and, it was easy to see, had mixed in superior circles. He was half inclined to "look in" at his little party.

Sauntering on, he began to think with tranquil pleasure on what he, without affectation, considered his "conquest," and the dramatic scene he had passed through. Marriage was not to be thought of. "Though," said Captain Fermor to himself, "I suppose, one of these days!"—that is to say, one of these days the nuptial Juggernaut would demand its victim and crunch his bones. He thought he would go and see them again, and have a petite verre of dramatic excitement. He wanted a filip. He looked at himself. Suitable touching and colouring had been got in skilfully. The canvas would do. "Poor, poor Hanbury," he said, smiling, "how he struggled and 'fopped' when he felt my harpoon in him!"

He was coming down one of the little streets of the town, when there crossed it at right angles, about a couple of hundred yards away, that very "poor, poor Hanbury," walking with that very Miss Violet Manuel of whom he had been thinking. They did not see him, and passed out of view in a moment. But he recognised at once a sort of check shooting-coat, which had often offended him on the score of its being in execrable taste, and his companion—not from dress, but from an instinct hard to describe—he knew at once. He stopped impatiently, turned back, then turned again, as if he were ashamed of himself for what looked like a mortification.

Curious to say, in the midst of all that confusion of anger, disgust, contempt, and disappointment, which seemed to choke him disagreeably, like a cloud of dust, he felt a sudden sharp stroke of pain, not coming from his recent illness or suffering, but of a kind that surprised him. It was not known to physicians or surgeons.

For the rest of the day he was moody, and bitter, and pettish, and felt a curious restlessness, which prevented his settling down to Mr. Mudie, or, indeed, to anything serious.

CHAPTER XVIII. ROGER LE GARÇON.

CAPTAIN FERMOR often said pleasantly that he was "a social Van Amburgh," and that he could tame any savage human lion with his steel whip. Pleased with himself for his handling of the next door wild animal, he very soon began to regard the wild animal itself with complacency. He was like a tonic, he thought, like bitters even: it was refreshing to meet these odd mental crooked sticks. The common run of minds were a heap of smooth sticks turned in a lathe. One stick was the duplicate of the other. And in this train of thought it occurred to him that it would be a "gentlemanly" thing for Van Amburgh to go in and call on the wild animal he had so happily tamed.

He knocked. A grim woman, like a Swiss toy, said that master was out—out in the garden, that is, which was as good as out. Let him "leave his business," whatever that might be. Fermor, growing highly sensitive, and selecting a card, was nervously making protest against the idea of his being supposed to be eager to secure his way, "Not at all! Pray don't, I have not the least wish in the world,—just give that, if you please," when there appeared at the end of the hall the tall, grim, cast-iron figure of Mr. Carlay, with a grey hat on, that looked like a stiff steel helmet, and leaning on a stick that might have been an iron rod.

"Captain Fermor," he said, without advancing to meet him, "from next door? Do you wish me to do anything for you? It is quite useless asking me. I know nobody, and nobody knows me."

"Excuse me," said Fermor, hastily, "you quite misunderstand. You need be under no apprehensions. Merely the common every-day form of leaving a card."

"A card?" said the other, taking it from the maid, and looking at it as if it were a curiosity. "Ah! I am outside all this sort of thing. One of the forms, as you say."

Not relishing the way in which his well-meant condescension was being accepted, Fermor said, "I am really sorry to have intruded on you. In fact, I—almost a mistake indeed. So you will excuse me."

He bowed and was going, when the grim voice said shortly, "Wait. Would you come into the garden a moment?"

"I don't understand," said Fermor, hesitating. "I don't care for flowers."

"I should not care to show you what I don't care for myself. I want to show you what I *do* care for—my daughter."

Fermor shrugged his shoulders as though he said, "I object to the whole business, but as there is a lady—lead on!"

The girl was sitting, as usual, in the sun, on a cushioned chair, and her head rested languidly on a soft pillow. Her eyes were fixed vacantly on one point.

"Here," said Mr. Carlay, stalking down upon her with the steady swing of a pendulum, "here is Mr. Fermor, the gentleman who sent the dog away."

The girl raised her head in some confusion, for she had thought it was only her father returning on his old grim beat.

Fermor, himself again in the presence of a lady, thought he would "reassure" her, and got on his most soothing manner. He was sorry to see she had been suffering, he hoped she was getting better. He was sure the air was good, at least *he* had found it so, for they were both invalids. His, indeed, was only a trifling accident, a scratch; people had, however, insisted.

Fermor used often pleasantly to divide humanity into tongues without ears, and into ears without tongues. The convalescent girl was of this latter class. He might, too, have classed her as a "devotional ear." In a very few moments he had set his fluency stop on, and the *ro eyo* was whirring round.

"Now take me," he said, "for instance. I think I may say I am independent of the usual associations. Someway I have trained myself to it. Other men talk of being bored, and that sort of thing. I can hardly follow them. I confess I have trained my mind systematically. I don't allow myself to be bored. I don't make any boast of it, &c., &c."

And in this way he aired the *ro eyo* up and down in a gentle canter, and opened to her the secrets of his personal psychology. She listened at first a little astonished, then not quite following him, finally interested. It was all new to her, who had been accustomed to the grim gritty diapason of her sire. She was a soft amiable girl, all gentleness, made for petting, and to have her hair smoothed through the day by fond hands. Seeing he had touched the proper key, Fermor put spurs to the *ro eyo*, and made it caracole with fire.

The grim Carlay, meanwhile, was walking far away up and down on a beat as if he were a Prussian sentry on duty. He took no account, and was no doubt working the cast-iron machinery he called his thoughts. After what Fermor thought of as a "conversation," but which, strictly, was a monologue, he went away. The grim sentry never went with him to the door. And this was Fermor's introduction to the Carlay family.

"Poor invalid," he thought, "what a life she must have?" And if his conversation had much the same virtue as a king's touch was believed

to have, it would be churlish not to apply it. "And yet I don't know," he thought; "people would say it was affectation. But I declare genuinely I take no trouble about it; the thing comes to my lips of itself."

Between the two gardens there was only a low wall. Taking his cigar in the morning, which he did about as regularly as he did his roll and coffee, he could see the "poor invalid" already disposed on her cushions; and leaning on the wall, he wished her good morning, and asked how she did. He was going to "touch" again, as the kings used to do. His eye noted a little change—a red bow on her neck, and an ornament or two.

He began again. He made the *το εγω*, or "I," leap the wall backwards and forwards, and perform all manner of gambols. "You think me affected. I know you do; yet I don't call it affectation. It really is not my way, &c.," according to the usual formula.

Fermor was "refined looking," and though only visible as a sort of Elgin marble, by reason of the wall, it was a very effective torso. He travelled through a couple of cigars before he had finished his monologue. Then he thought, with his skilful powers, he would examine this "child" on her history, about which he was a little curious, which made *her* talk, and the simplicity of her narrative amused him. Then he tried her on reading, she saying that she read a good deal. Did she read French? Indeed! Had she ever read a thing of Roger le Garçon, called *La Rose en Evidence*? No? Then would she let him send it in to her?

"Common people," said Fermor, "taking up that book, would say it was a common thing. Of course they would. I found it out. Mind, I don't want you to take *my* view. You must, of course, judge for yourself. I only say this, that if you want philosophy, sense, wit, and human nature, you have it there. Above all," said Fermor, becoming deeply grave, "it is fit for any lady's perusal. I am always most careful, I assure you."

In the evening arrived Roger le Garçon, in paper swaddling-clothes, and sealed with pink sealing-wax. Roger le Garçon had not made his fame as yet, nor did he enjoy the esteem on railway stall or bookseller's shelf, which Fermor awarded him. Some day, no doubt, it would come. There was a picture or two by an artist of the name of Calkinwood, who had been much neglected by the public, and a song or two by an undiscovered composer, in which he discovered beauties corresponding to those of Roger le Garçon, and thus literature, music, and painting, were embodied in Calkinwood, Roger le Garçon, and the undiscovered composer. But the little pale green Roger had gone on many visits to ladies' houses, and had travelled round the country like the Kensington Loan Collection.

It was the calumet or pipe of peace of all Fermor's intimacies. Once it had passed into her room, a telegraphic cable had been successfully laid. This was but the first step; then

there was to follow a little series of lectures and illustrations of the beauties of Roger le Garçon.

THE LIVES AND DEATHS OF THE PEOPLE.

THE Medical Officer of the Privy Council is required by the Public Health Act of the year 'fifty-eight, to submit to the Lords of Council for presentation to Parliament a yearly report of the proceedings which their lordships, with his advice, have directed to be taken under that act. The actual work thus done under authority of Privy Council has been of a kind to attest the worth of the services of Mr. John Simon as a first-rate sanitary officer, empowered to feel the pulse of the country. His series of reports represents, in fact, a continuous inquiry into the cause and distribution of diseases that may be abated or abolished. There is no feeble endeavour to take in at one grasp the whole vast argument; but having set out in the report of 'fifty-eight with an argument "on the preventability of certain kinds of premature death" which served as a programme to the inquiry, Mr. Simon has worked year after year in steady pursuance of a single plan. And so he is gathering slowly and surely into the series of his annual reports a harmonised body of the most practical information on the causes and the distribution of disease. Thus, in 'fifty-nine, he set on foot a skilled inquiry into the social and personal conditions tending to produce diarrhoea and diphtheria. In the two following years he directed investigation of the facts connected with the prevalence of consumption and diseases of the lungs. In 'sixty-two he instituted inquiries into the effects of working with arsenical green and with phosphorus. Every year, but especially in the year 'sixty, he has pursued inquiry into the conditions producing typhoid fever, and the variations in its relative mortality. This year's report, published a few weeks ago, while it adds largely to the information given last year upon the state of vaccination in this country and the consequences of neglect, takes up several fresh topics in the study of preventable disease; the most prominent being an inquiry into the sufficiency of the food taken by different classes of the people.

As to the state of public vaccination, our chief officer of health may well push forward an active system of inquiry, since small-pox, which has not killed one person in the last eight years in the Grand Duchy of Baden, and has not destroyed a life in Copenhagen for the last thirteen years, killed two thousand persons last year in London only. By experience of what has actually been done elsewhere, it has been clearly proved that the disease can be extinguished by a complete system of efficient vaccination; very great importance attaches, therefore, to the report of the physicians, Dr. Seaton and Dr. Buchanan, who were directed by the Privy Council to inquire into the state of vaccination

among Londoners. Their report stands first in the appendix to Mr. Simon's Blue Book, which contains first, in about eighty pages, his own generalisation of and comment upon the results of the year's inquiries, and then in seven hundred pages an appendix formed of the original reports of the skilled inspectors who were directed to inquire into the different matters chosen this year as the special subjects of investigation.

A statistical return of the Registrar-General's, lately printed, shows that while in forty-four of the six hundred and twenty-seven registration districts of England, there were in ten years no deaths from small-pox among children under five years old, other districts varied much in the rate of mortality proportioned to the neglect of vaccination. In Shrewsbury the mortality from small-pox among young children forms more than a ninth part of the deaths from all causes; in Northampton and Plymouth about an eighth part, and in Merthyr Tydfil as much as a sixth! It is shown that these variations are dependent on the state of public vaccination. Thus, from their elaborate examination of the state of children in the London Vaccination district, Doctors Seaton and Buchanan find that there is, from several causes, failure to a great extent by actual neglect of vaccination, varying in degree in different districts, and by vaccination inefficiently performed. Of those vaccinated only a third part have obtained the high degree of protection furnished by the production of four good sized vesicles. The hands of particular good or bad vaccinators could be clearly traced by the scars on the arms of the school children. Thus we are told that the vaccination of Mr. Guazzaroni could be recognised by its conspicuous excellence, in any school in Kensington, and that "some very fine vaccine scars were seen in Lambeth Infant School, the work of Doctor Smyth." So it is not only in works from the desk or the easel that a good critic recognises and admires the distinctive artist hand. Of a thousand children who showed on their arms the trace of a vaccinating master-hand, the proportion that were also pitted by small-pox, was but one and a quarter; of those showing good scars, the proportion was two and a half; of those who had been ill vaccinated, this proportion in the thousand was seven and a half; but of those who had not been vaccinated at all, the proportion in the thousand was three hundred and sixty! So that while thoroughly good vaccination, indicated by the production of four perfect vesicles, is thirty times safer than bad vaccination; even bad vaccination is fifty times safer, and moderately good vaccination is two hundred times safer, than no vaccination at all.

Efficient public vaccination is most surely obtained when the vaccination stations are convenient for the population they are meant to serve, are carefully dissociated by the parishes from the whole machinery of poor relief, and are open only on one day in the week. What is wanted is a continuous course of arm to arm vaccination, and this is only to be secured where

the vaccinator operates on about five hundred cases in the year, and brings most of them together at fixed intervals. As for the connexion between public vaccination and the parish doctor, it simply hunts the public from the vaccinators' doors. In Deptford and Woolwich, one of the public vaccinators was the parish surgeon, who vaccinated in his surgery at the hours fixed for attendance of the pauper cases of sickness. This was resented by the independent poor, who sent nearly all their children to the vaccinator who had no parish appointment. In St. George's-in-the-East many parents refused to allow their children to be touched by the public vaccinator himself, who was also the parish surgeon, but went readily to the surgery of his deputy, who had no parish appointment. Practising upon this feeling, the parish authorities of St. Giles's, who thought it desirable to force as many as they could into the hands of private vaccinators, opened no other public vaccinating station than the workhouse and some adjacent premises used for parish purposes. Inquiry shows that public vaccination is, on the whole, decidedly more efficient than that by private practitioners, who are but occasionally called upon to operate. It is desirable, therefore, to encourage to the utmost, instead of discouraging, the use of the vaccinating stations legally established, and to disconnect from them utterly whatever can suggest the notion that the use of them is a receipt of the grudging parish alms.

These questions concerning vaccination have been especially forced on attention by the epidemic of small-pox in London, which began at the east end of the town in the middle of the year 'sixty-two, kept pretty much north of the Thames, and was at its height in the second quarter of the year 'sixty-three. The number of deaths was considerably more than two thousand above the average. Still, in the severest epidemic London has seen for the last twenty years, the deaths in a year from small-pox among each hundred thousand of the population have been only seventy-one, the average but ten; while a century and a half ago the average was a hundred and fifty, and the rate of mortality of some years among each hundred thousand was four hundred and seventy.

To get rid of small-pox altogether, nothing is wanted but a complete and effective system of public vaccination. Within half a mile of every house there might be a vaccine station for a district large enough and well enough frequented to provide, at its fixed hours, a certainty to every mother taking her child thither, of finding at the right time, the right man ready to do his work in the right way, and fresh lymph for him to work with. There should be fifty or sixty stations and no more, under the regulation of an independent committee, exercising all the functions now exercised in this matter by thirty-nine separate authorities, and there should be an effective register and law to compel parents to have their children rightly vaccinated.

The next subject of inquiry in the Health Officer's Budget is the sort of support given to

health by the food of the people. We can know but imperfectly what goes to build up or destroy the health of a people, if we give no heed to its meat and drink. For due inquiry into the food of the English labouring classes it was necessary to pay some attention to the dietaries of the working class in Scotland and Ireland. Of course inquiry could be made only in a few households that seemed to be fair samples of their class, between five and six hundred in England, about thirty in Scotland, and about fifty in Ireland. As a general rule, too, it must needs appear that the unmarried labourer had the most money to spend upon himself, and that the married labourer, who had to keep up the strength by which he lived, usually fared better than his wife and children, who were in some counties miserably fed. The inquirer set out with a theoretical view of the chemical elements of life in fuel, food, and flesh-producing food, and the quantity of each necessary to avert starvation diseases. A woman, he said, must have in her daily food at least three thousand nine hundred grains of carbon, and a hundred and eighty grains of nitrogen, or as much nourishment as is contained in a half-quarter loaf. A man wants usually about a ninth part more. Now, there were examined forty-two families of silk-weavers, and these did not quite come up to the mark; and thirty-one families of needlewomen, and these did not nearly come up to the mark; and of the farm labourers' families more than a third were below the mark; and though the mark is a theoretical one, yet that it is no bad standard of what is meant by "just enough to eat," was shown when it was applied in the preceding year to the Lancashire operatives, for the average health was found to be below par whenever the quantity of food taken was pronounced by such a test to be inadequate. There are more mysteries in the matter of diet and nutrition, and the use of the same food under different conditions of life, than any man can express chemically; but there is nothing very theoretical or far-fetched, or incredible, in the assertion that a healthy working woman must eat at least a half-quarter loaf every day, and that a man must eat a loaf and a thick slice off another, or get the same quantity of nourishment in other victuals, and is likely to fail in health if fed below that standard. We can all understand that and believe it. And when the food is below par, it is not only in food that privation has been suffered. "It must be remembered," says Mr. Simon, "that privation of food is very reluctantly borne, and that, as a rule, great poorness of diet will only come when other privations have preceded it. Long before insufficiency of diet is a matter of hygienic concern, long before the physiologist would think of counting the grains of carbon and nitrogen which intervene between life and starvation, the household will have been utterly destitute of material comfort—clothing and fuel will have been even scantier than food; against inclemencies of weather there will have been no adequate protection; dwelling space will have been stinted

to the degree in which over-crowding produces or increases disease; of household utensils and furniture there will have been scarcely any; even cleanliness will have been found costly or difficult; and if there be still self-respectful efforts to maintain it, every such endeavour will represent additional pangs of hunger. The home, too, will be where shelter can be cheapest bought—in quarters where commonly there is least fruit of sanitary supervision, least drainage, least scavenging, least suppression of public nuisances, least, or worst, water supply, and, if in towns, least light and air. Such are the sanitary dangers to which poverty is almost certainly exposed, when it is poverty enough to imply scantiness of food. And while the sum of them is of terrible magnitude against life, the mere scantiness of food is in itself of very serious moment."

But in respect of a large number of our underfed poor, much can be done by the mere diffusion of information. They don't know how to make the most of their means. England, for example, falls curiously behind Scotland and Ireland in the use of milk, which, if its price be compared with its great nourishing power, is cheaper food than almost anything used in its place. The oversight is not peculiar to the English poor. Let any Highlander in an English town, seeing a milkman on his summer rounds, observe the size of his cans and ask him how many families he supplies out of them, and the answer will astonish him. Especially in a house where there are children, it would be well if every one remembered that milk is not a luxury to be bought by ha'porths and used only for the spoiling of tea, but that it is a cheap and precious article of diet, which, if freely used, may have its cost saved in less valuable and more expensive articles of diet for the young, and, especially, ten times and twenty times over in doctors' bills. In Wales they take their milk in the shape of cheese, which is very nourishing.

Dr. Edward Smith, in conducting his inquiry into the food of our labouring classes, looked for healthy, intelligent, and thrifty families, living as carefully as they could by labour that produced small earnings. The questions asked were private, and their intrusiveness was met with a cordial readiness to help to a good end; there was reluctance to answer questions only in half a dozen instances; wherever it was shown, of course all questioning was desisted from. With the readiest there was always difficulty in calculating averages, for families with small earnings are never equally well off at all times of the year; their diet also, especially where they have that important aid to health, a patch of garden ground, or where there is fish accessible, varies much with the season. In the north of Scotland, says Dr. Smith, "the idea of an average is a leading feature of the mind," and it was easier to estimate the dietary for all the year round.

But now to begin with the in-door workers, and take first the silk-weavers and throwsters. These are well paid when in full work, but their

trade has been for many years so prostrated, that they are, as a rule, ill fed; though the fluctuations in their earning power make it difficult and somewhat delusive to speak of their diet by the way of averages. So far as averages go, they are, says Dr. Smith, below the minimum by about a thousand grains of carbon and a hundred and eighty grains of nitrogen a week. They use, on an average, nine and a half pounds of bread a week to each adult. One man said, that in times of plenty the consumption of bread in his family rises from twenty-eight to forty-two pounds; nearly all were found using potatoes at the rate of about two pounds a week for each adult. One family in three used other garden stuffs, but in more than half of the families some use was made of treacle as a substitute for butter. Two in three were found to eat bacon in quantities varying from a quarter of a pound to two pounds in the week; two in seven were found to eat butchers' meat in quantities varying from a quarter of a pound to six pounds weekly. The whole average is a little over two pounds of meat weekly to each family. But this is had irregularly. There would be none in bad weeks, and it would be bought when work was better. Or it would be bought for the Sunday's dinner; often a baked sheep's head, or breast of mutton, with the dripping kept for use throughout the week, and what might be left of the meat eaten next day. Only where there is great thrift, and some sufficiency of income, is meat found to be eaten daily. There is a general dislike to the fat of meat, and a general desire for relishable food, as herrings, cockles, shrimps, cooked fish, stewed trotters, sausages, pickled pork, black-puddings, liver and bacon. The average allowance of milk was found to be a pint a week for each adult; but at Macclesfield, where there was no beer drunk, two or three times as much. Tea was found to be used in every family but one, the average consumption being two ounces a week to a family, but in Spitalfields three ounces and a half. Coffee was used in half the families from among whom these general results were got. All but two out of seventeen London families of silk-weavers were found to drink beer, nearly five pints a week being the quantity per family of those who drank it. The average cost of a week's food, was found to vary in different places from twenty to thirty-three pence for each adult; being lowest at Macclesfield, where the greatest actual amount of nourishment was got for a shilling, and highest at Bethnal-green and Spitalfields, where the food bought was the least nourishing. The London weaver pays heavily for meat and tea, buying both in the most costly way, bacon by pennyworths, and tea by daily quarter ounces. In London the children working away from home, instead of taking with them dinner prepared by the mother, are supplied with three-halfpence or twopence a day, dinner money, which they spend at a cook-shop: usually a penny upon pudding and a halfpenny upon potatoes. When they spend twopence, they

are permitted to sit down and have a little gravy, or fat, added to their meal.

But of all classes the quality and quantity of whose food was inquired into, the needlewomen were found to be faring the worst. They have taken to their calling when other resources failed, and are a very mixed class, bound together only by the community of want. The average income of each adult is just below four shillings a week: there being complaint of insufficient work in every department, and the poor women sometimes remaining unemployed for weeks together. Sometimes the needlewoman receives a weekly loaf of bread from the parish, to which she adds what else her earnings will permit. The workers are all in feeble health, and use tea at the average rate, for each adult, of an ounce and a quarter weekly; some use half an ounce a day, being refreshed and sustained through hours of toil, though little nourished by its costly stimulus. They do not even put food into it by a free use of milk, which is only bought by one needlewoman out of three, and then usually at the rate of a farthing's-worth a day. Of meat some buy two ounces for three-halfpence, others two ounces of bacon daily; others a quarter of a pound of cooked meat three times a week, and half a pound on Sunday; others only a pennyworth of sheep's brains for the Sunday dinner, or a pennyworth of black pudding for dinner or supper. The weekly average cost of the needlewoman's food is two and sevenpence, and she so spends a shilling as to get less food for it than any other member of the poorer labouring class.

In the south of England there is an extensive manufacture of kid gloves, Yeovil being its centre. Three and sixpence is paid for seaming the backs of a dozen kid gloves; the stitcher, who is obliged to stoop to the machine and place her eyes very near her work, can only live by working for twelve hours a day. In one case the stitcher worked from six in the morning until eleven at night, to earn five and sixpence a week. "It was lamentable," says Dr. Edward Smith, "to see children from nine to fourteen years of age kept at this employment during the whole day, seeing nothing of the world around them, and cut off from the amusements and exertion so natural to children, and so necessary at the period of growth. The needlewomen of London did not impress my mind so unfavourably as the stitchers of gloves at Yeovil, since the former were for the most part in middle or advanced life, whilst here were children or young women who were consuming their health and losing the pleasures of life for the barest pittance." The Derbyshire stocking and glove weavers, who earn in their hamlets an average of nine shillings a week each man, or nearly seventeen shillings a week each family, make their own bread, eat oatmeal gruel, make more than an average use of peas and rice, have nearly all of them small cottage gardens which supply fresh vegetables, use meat and bacon, take an average of six pints of milk to each family, and use, in half the houses, eggs. The average cost

of food was found to be twelve and sixpence a week for each family, and although not in a high state of health, they live well up to the minimum of what is necessary for continued health. In the shoemakers of Stafford and Northampton health is not good, for there is want of thrift and cleanliness, and as the wife and children are very ill paid for their labour, the support of the family falls on the husband. A pair of Blucher boots at one-and-threepence, or of Clarence boots at two-and-a-penny the pair, is rather less than the day's work of a moderate workman, and the fact that a pair of boots can be made in a day has led to the habit of taking the work home for daily payment, and of buying the food daily in small quantities. In nine families where the wife and children added something to the earnings, the average income was a pound a week. But two pounds a week is the extreme earning power of a first-class workman.

As a general result of the inquiry among all these classes, it appeared that of bread the needlewomen eat least, the shoemakers most; that of the persons interrogated in all classes, only four—three of them being kid-glovers—went wholly without sugar, the kid-glovers generally using least sugar, the needlewomen and stocking-makers most; the balance of carbon in the diet being readjusted in these cases by an exactly reverse proportion in the use of butter. Only in five of the whole number of cases was there no meat at all eaten, and the five were all found among the silk-weavers of Macclesfield and Coventry. But twenty in every hundred eat butchers' meat in no appreciable quantity, preferring to use bacon. Beer of the ordinary strength was found to be drunk very generally by the silk-weavers of London, and by the shoemakers, and a very weak beer by the stocking-makers of parts of Derbyshire. In half the families who were taken as fair types of the condition of the poorer labouring class, beer formed no part of the household dietary.

From families sustained by in-door occupation the inquiry turned to the labourers of England out of doors. There is great variation in the rate of living in different counties, besides local peculiarities of dietary, as in the cider counties of Devon and Worcester, and the oat and barley district of the north of England. The total income of the labourer's family is often much greater than the wages of the husband; thus, in two families in Wiltshire, the whole earnings were twenty-six shillings a week, although the wages of the husband were but nine shillings. It is hard to reckon in averages these variations, and the value of allowances often made of wheat, potatoes, or potato ground, barley, milk, beer, cider. "In Dorsetshire, where the nominal wages are eight shillings a week in money, there are also free rent of house and garden, fuel cut and carried, a chain of potato ground prepared and manured, and a bushel of wheat (worth five shillings) monthly. These are estimated at about four shillings a week. A shilling is also given when sent on a long journey. In summer-time twenty shillings

extra are allowed for harvest-work. One gallon of cider per day, at fourpence per gallon, for six months to the labourer, three pints of cider per day during six months for the wife, and one quart of cider for each working boy, during the same period, are given. This estimate is derived from Sir John Smith's property near to Maiden Newton, and clearly shows that the wages in money do not represent two thirds of the whole income, but it must be added that these advantages are not universal." The income of the farm-labourer's family may also be increased by employment of some members of it on straw-work in Beds, Bucks, Essex, Herts, Oxford, &c.; on gloving in Somerset, Wilts, Dorset, Devon, &c.; on mining and metal work in Gloucestershire, Derbyshire, Notts, Salop, Northampton, Northumberland, Cumberland, Yorkshire, &c.; on mill-work, and various kinds of weaving in Derbyshire, Notts, and Yorkshire; on dockyards in Devon; on needle-making in Worcestershire; on blanket-making in Oxfordshire; on the knitting of babies' boots in Rutland, &c.; on railway labour, and brick-making in many counties, and upon various industries in agricultural districts on the outskirts of large towns. Potato-ground is a great comfort to the farm-labourer. When potatoes have to be bought, he and his wife reckon them to be dearer than bread, but when grown they save bread, in some families as much as two shillings a week, and they have the advantage over bread, of enabling the housewife to make up a hot meal with the morsel of meat or bacon, that would otherwise be cold and uninviting. Cabbage they cannot eat without meat, unless fried in fat; slight use is made of turnips; but onions, which can be eaten growing, or can be kept for use, are a constant blessing of savouriness in almost every cottage. In some counties, the farm labourers are found to regard sugar as a luxury; in Devon, where milk is abundant, it is most rarely given to any member of a family except the infant. Its use is, of course, increased in the fruit season. Only one family in a hundred was found, among all the poorly paid labourers of England, living wholly without meat; but thirty in a hundred adopt bacon as their only meat, and forty-six in a hundred use both butchers' meat and bacon. There is a general belief that beef is better food than mutton. As to bacon, though English bacon costs eightpence or tenpence a pound, and American bacon is now generally to be had for fourpence and sixpence, it is the costly English bacon that our poor buy, and consider cheapest of all meats.

American bacon wastes much in the boiling, and as the water in which it has been boiled is usually thrown away, there are so many slices said to have been lost. On the other hand, in frying it does not waste with liquid fat, which is the children's share out of the frying-pan, the dripping for their bread. Good bacon is popular with our poor because it does not shrink in boiling as butchers' meat does, while it supplies fat in which cabbage may be boiled; because it can

be fried in little squares, with greens and potatoes, making a savoury mess, and leaving dripping in the pan; because, unlike butchers' meat, it can be stored in the house; and in some degree also, because it is sold by the grocer who gives credit, while the butcher requires ready money payment. Where there is not much meat used in the cottage of the labourer, it is all cooked for the Sunday dinner, usually the only one at which the whole family is collected and sits at rest together in unwonted ease. What is left from the Sunday dinner is on the following week-days the husband's, and whether he take it with him bit by bit to his daily dinner in the fields, or eat it at home, it is his, as a matter of course, ungrudged. The household faith is "that the husband wins the bread and must have the best food." His physical well-being is the prop of the house. If he have eaten up his remainder of meat or bacon by the middle of the week, and there be butter or cheese, he takes that for his dinner at the close of the week, and the wife, and children at home are then reduced to dry bread, which is converted into a hot meal by the use of tea. When the dietary is poor, and produces little animal heat, hot foods are as valuable as they are comfortable. Dr. Smith attaches little value to the small quantity of inferior tea that gives its name to the warm drink, and believes that the great charm of the tea lies in its warmth, but the twelve pints of skim milk that he wishes they would buy in Devon with the same threepence they spend upon an ounce of tea, can also be made boiling hot; yet it is felt, and we do not doubt rightly, that though it may contain more food it will not give the same sort of cheerful refreshment that even bad and weak tea gives to those who, knowing little of better, are not offended by its flavour.

But often even in country places the labourer cannot get as much milk as he wants. "In many districts, and those perhaps where the farms are largest, as in Wiltshire, the farmer finds it a trouble to serve the skimmed milk to the customers. The dairymaid is needed for other work, and the mistress thinks it below her position; and hence he gives it to his calves, pigs, and hounds, and refuses it even to his labourers. I found," says Dr. Smith, "families living in the midst of plenty of this kind of food, who would have willingly purchased it, but had not been able to obtain it for two years, and where, in consequence, the health of the children suffered." One mother, living among Wiltshire dairies, of which the farmers would not sell milk, had brought up five children, and the whole had not drunk one gallon of milk. Like cases were met with in Somerset, Gloucester, Lincolnshire, Suffolk, and other counties. Buttermilk is almost wasted in England as a very cheap nutritive and plentiful article of food, and whey is almost invariably given to the pigs.

On the whole, it appears that the farm-labourer, apart from his family, is adequately fed, long lived, and little troubled with sickness. When he takes his meals at the farm-house, his risk in the way of diet is from over-feeding. He has

usually four meals a day, meat and bacon once, twice, and even three times a day, milk twice a day, puddings or pies three times a day in Devon, and usually daily elsewhere; beer also or cider. In Yorkshire he is found to get cheesecakes and custards almost daily at breakfast and dinner, or even to take an hour's nap after dinner. He objects to mutton because it is fat, and throws the fat under the table. When living at home, the labourer who gets in some counties large allowances of cider or weak beer, drinks it all, the instances being exceedingly few in which any is saved in his small wooden cask, and carried home for the comfort of the wife and children. In harvest-time, in the cider counties, men not only drink their allowance of a gallon a day, but, as there is then no limitation, are found drinking daily two gallons and more.

In the principality, North Wales was found to be more prosperous than South Wales, the farm-labourers better paid, and better fed with better kinds of food. In South Wales very little meat of any sort is used, but health is maintained on bread and milk and cheese. Dr. Smith regrets that the use of tea and coffee is spreading in the poor districts of North Wales, for his carbon and nitrogen theory is not large enough to comprehend a reason for their popularity.

In Scotland, the shepherds increase considerably their meat diet, by eating the lambs and sheep which die of an acute disease called braxy, and perhaps also of staggers, and some other ailments less acute. The mutton is salted, and becomes stored meat. The free use of milk and oatmeal also gives an advantage to the Scotch farm-labourer. In Ireland, Dr. Smith rejoices in the abundance of meal, potato, and milk. When potatoes are plentiful, and are, with buttermilk, the sole food of the peasantry, the daily allowance at a farm-house to each man is ten pounds and a half of potatoes, and three pints of milk; a day's food which includes no less than ten pounds of fluid. One of the labourer's families visited in Ireland was found to be consuming four hundred and forty-one pounds of potatoes weekly. Since the potato famine, the use of this popular diet has been restricted to a portion of the year, and the instances have been few in which the labourer has been able, as he used to do, to eat his pig. The pig is now sold to pay rent, or buy clothes. The average cost of a poor Irishman's food is one and twopence a week; of a poor Englishman's, a shilling more; of a poor Scotchman, yet another sixpence more than the Englishman's; and of a poor Welshman, about twopence more than that of the Scotchman; but the Irish, says Dr. Smith, get the most, and the English the least, nourishment; supposing the whole question of nourishment to be, as he takes it, a mere question of so many grains more or less of nitrogen and carbon.

Our Chancellor of the Health Exchequer takes for the next topic of his yearly Budget, a particular disease of defective nourishment, the sea scurvy in the mercantile marine, a result of

deficiency in vegetable food. This is reported upon by Dr. Robert Barnes, physician to the Dreadnought, who shows that nearly half the men admitted into the Sailors' Home at Poplar, are suffering from scurvy at the time of their admission, and that a twentieth part are seriously diseased with it. Scurvy has furnished a twenty-fourth part of all the cases admitted during the last dozen years into the Dreadnought Hospital Ship. Many cases never pass through hospital, but lie in the low lodging-houses by the waterside. Shipowners of Liverpool and other northern ports, of Hamburg and America, are said by Dr. Barnes to "exhibit the greatest amount of disregard of the safety and health of their crews." There were recently admitted to the Dreadnought, twelve cases of severe scurvy from one ship in which nineteen was the whole complement of officers and men. A ship at sea, so disabled of men, could not reef topsails or bring the ship to in a gale of wind, and ships must sometimes, from this cause, be lost at sea. Yet scurvy is altogether a preventable disease. Vegetable food is its one essential antidote. Lemon-juice was introduced into the navy in the year seventeen ninety six; and in Haslar Hospital, which before that time received upwards of fourteen hundred cases in a year, scurvy is now an almost unknown disease. There used also to be a land scurvy when vegetable food was little used on shore. In the merchant service, says Dr. Barnes, scurvy is never known in the cabin, and "if the captain and mates know how to preserve themselves, they know how to preserve their men." Scurvy would be rare if even the mere provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act were obeyed. Mr. Simon counsels inspection by the officer of customs who boards ships arrived from a long voyage, to secure fulfilment of the requisite provisions of that act, as well as a coroner's inquest upon every man who is brought home to die of scurvy.

The next question is of employments hurtful in themselves, or hurtfully conducted. Thus, Dr. Whitley has been inquiring into the state of workers in lead and mercury. These have their lives shortened by hurtful employments, workers of lead being better protected than they used to be, though still suffering much from the poison where the work causes lead-dust to float in the air. Work upon quicksilver is either in water-gilding—a process most injurious to health, but employing few persons, and now being superseded by electroplate—or in the far larger business of mirror silvering, wherein our Health Officer holds, that "employers should be bound to provide all practicable arrangements for lessening danger to their workpeople, and should be prohibited from employing any person who presents, even in ever so small a degree, any sign of the characteristic metallic poisoning."

As to the unhealthy conduct of in-door work, not in itself injurious, by the over-crowding and bad ventilation, that breeds lung disease, by working without necessary rest or otherwise—three branches of industry, noted for frequent

sins of this sort, are investigated: the occupations of the dressmakers and needlewomen, the tailors, and the printers. Dressmakers suffer by over-crowding and deficient ventilation less than printers, printers less than tailors. Tailors work in their close rooms for twelve and thirteen hours a day, sometimes for fifteen or sixteen hours; printers have lighter work upon a weekly average, though there may be great strain at one part of the week, especially in the printing-offices of weekly newspapers. In printers and tailors, consumption and other lung diseases are in vast excess, and form two-thirds of all the causes of death; while between the ages of thirty-five and forty-five the mortality among London printers is notably more than twice as high as that of the male agricultural population. This is not a fact to take for granted and let alone. Mr. Simon asks that the effective ventilation of all in-door work-places be made compulsory by some appropriate provision of the law.

The next item in the Health Officer's Budget is Dr. Whitley's inquiry into the extent of marsh malaria in England, showing in what districts it is especially necessary that improvements should be made with a view to the complete (and altogether possible) destruction of this enemy to life and health. Upon this follows Dr. Hunter's inquiry into the remarkably high rate of infant mortality in certain marsh districts, which is traced mainly to a peculiar custom of retaining in familiar use the opium once used as a popular remedy for ague. A retail druggist in the Fens will regard opium as his leading article, and sell as much as two hundred pounds of it in a year, serving three or four hundred customers on a Saturday night with penny sticks or pills. A man in South Lincolnshire complained that his wife had spent a hundred pounds in opium since she married him. A man setting about a hard job takes his pill to set him a-going, and many never take their beer without dropping a piece of opium into it. With the opium believed in by the parents and nurses, children are quieted, and quieted to death. Every village shop pulls its own brew of the deadly "Godfrey."

The prevention of diseases that arise in hospitals, as erysipelas after operation, or the spread of contagious fevers—the whole large question in fact of the healthy construction and management of hospitals—is next opened. Dr. Bristowe and Mr. Holmes report from personal inspection upon almost every civil hospital of note in England and Scotland, and upon the chief hospitals in Ireland, describing and commenting upon their construction, and reporting facts that show the degree of their healthiness. In this respect the great point for practical consideration is the ventilation of wards. Gentle and inoffensive currents of fresh air must scour every corner, and "hitherto," says Mr. Simon, in summing up the case, "without exception, plans of artificial ventilation for wards have been costly and fatal failures. . . . Whatever other appliances exist, a ward must be perfectly ventilable by its windows." The windows are the chief natural inlet of air, and an important out-

let; but the chimneys and the subsidiary shafts are other ways out for the used air.

The last topic of this comprehensive sanitary budget is violent interference with life or health, and that is discussed this year in certain forms of Accidental and Criminal Poisoning, which have been investigated and reported on by Doctor Alfred Taylor. Doctor Taylor points out that, as to criminal poisoning, there is virtually no check upon the purchase of poison enough to kill two adults, by anybody who is in the possession of threepence; while, as to accidental poisoning, incompetent druggists' lads again and again give oxalic acid for Epsom salts, arsenic for calomel, or even for magnesia. Even small village shopkeepers, who know nothing at all of drugs, sell deadly poisons, and keep them so loosely in store that thirty pounds of sugar or lead have been sent instead of alum for a miller to mix with his flour, and twelve pounds of arsenic have been sold to a lozenge maker in mistake for twelve pounds of plaster of Paris. Surely the law should make men heavily responsible who commit such mistakes. They are accidents that would not often happen if they were treated according to their true characters as serious offences.

QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD. *

CHAPTER LI. PRESENTIMENT.

THE countess and Lily were speedily installed in the Cottage.

The dwelling placed at the countess's disposal by Mr. M'Variety might, with almost equal propriety, have been dubbed the Barn, or the Mansion House, or the Log Cabin, for it partook, in pretty well-balanced degrees, of each and every one of the characteristics of the edifices just mentioned. Perhaps, when Ranelagh was the country-house of some great seventeenth-century nobleman, it had been a Mansion—indeed, it yet boasted a fine old carved porch, and some latticed windows with deep embrasures of stone, which had a Mansion House look; but it had been half burned down, and patched up again with bricks and boards in a most heterogeneous fashion. What kind of roof it had originally possessed, was uncertain. The existing one was certainly of thatch. Its career had been an eminently varied one; and successive lessees of Ranelagh had put it to all kinds of uses. Mrs. Snuffburn, the housekeeper, who had lived through many managements, and whose memory was prodigious, was ready to take her affidavit that she had known the Cottage when it was converted into a cow-house. Manager Wobbell, who rented the gardens in '36, the Great Balloon year, was of an agricultural turn of mind, and kept pigs in the garden attached to the Cottage. His famous trotting pony, Hydrocephalous, was put out to grass in the adjoining paddock, and in the great hall he kept the Indian corn which he had grown after

an approved recipe of the late Mr. Cobbett. The corn came up beautifully; only the rats devoured the greater portion of the crop when it was garnered in, and the residue turned bad, so as to excite, the rather, ridicule than competition when exhibited on a stall in Mark-lane as the Royal Ranelagh Corn.

Monsieur Folliculaire, from Paris, who took the Gardens in the Coronation year (you remember: Folliculaire of Tivoli and the Montagnes Russes, who used to give promenade concerts long before Jullien was heard of), "renounced," to use his own expression, and redecorated the Cottage in the Louis Quinze style, covering the ceilings with flying personages out of Lemprière's Dictionary, and very scantily attired, and the walls with mirrors, gaseliers, and festooned draperies of pink and white glazed calico. Folliculaire was an imaginative man, mad as a March hare. His endeavours, nevertheless, were commendable. At the clapping of hands, tables laden with the choicest viands and the rarest wines were to rise through trap-doors; you had only to lift a corner of the tablecloth to find the keys of a harpsichord; and the ice-creams were always sent up in shapes representing the Venus de Médicis or the Belle Chocolatière. But the machinery of the supper-tables wouldn't work, and the choice viands and rare wines were apt either to stick, in medio, between supper-room and cellar, after the manner of Mahomet's coffin, or else to shoot up suddenly, with alarming crash of crockeryware, scattering dismay and gravity among the assembled guests. Compelled to have recourse to manual aid in lieu of mechanical appliances, Folliculaire engaged waitresses who wore high powdered toupes, hoops, short skirts, and high-heeled shoes, according to the pattern of the shepherdesses of Watteau and Lancret. These young ladies, however, complained that the high-heeled shoes, in addition to being painful to walk upon, conduced to corns, and that the powder spoilt their hair. Folliculaire suggested wigs; but the perruques were continually tumbling into plates of lobster salad, and, besides, made the young ladies' heads ache. In despair, he replaced the shepherdesses by a corps of graceful nymphs attired as vivandières of the French army; and, for a while, the blue tunics, white aprons, and scarlet pantaloons, proved very attractive; but, as a rule, the British aristocracy were languid in availing themselves of the delights of the Trianon Pompadour; and the sudden bankruptcy and flight of Folliculaire (he now keeps a coffee-house at Malta) nipped in the bud his ingenious project for converting the Trianon into an Oriental Kiosque, with divans for smokers, and a bey of houis, dressed like Gulbeyaz in Don Juan, to hand chibouques, narghilés, and coffee to the visitors, and execute Bayadère dances in the centre of the saloon.

By turns property-room, scene-shed, firework repository, and general repository for odds and ends, the Cottage had fallen into a curious state of dilapidation. The night watchman lived

there at one period. Sundry cocks and hens found out that the deserted rooms were good places to roost in, but they were at length driven out by the rats. At last a legend, which had long lain dormant, was revived, and the Cottage was declared to be haunted. The watchman, who averred that he had seen sights "enuff to make a man's marrer turn to hicc," but was otherwise (as is ordinarily the case with ghost-seers) unable to particularise that which he had seen, removed to other quarters; while people, who hadn't seen anything, were, as usual, quite ready to invest the supernatural visitants of the Cottage with a definite form, only they were not unanimous. There was a party for a lady in a white nightgown much bedabbled with blood; there was another (headed by the cook) who placed implicit faith in the nocturnal appearance of a figure with horns and hoofs, who vomited sulphurous flames, and was supposed to be the spectre of a deceased firework man, who had sold himself to the Enemy of Mankind; while a by no means unimportant section, who pinned their faith to the assertions of the chief lamp-lighter, entertained no doubt whatever as to the periodical issue from the Cottage of two skeleton forms, mounted, one on the shoulders of the other, on a black horse, with eyes of fire. These were at once set down as the phantoms of the dauntless but unfortunate Babylonian Brothers, both of whom contrived to break their necks in a dare-devil ring performance in the reign of Manager Wobbel.

His subordinates thought Mr. M'Variety a very bold man, when, on assuming the leaseholdship of Ranelagh, he announced his intention of living in the haunted Cottage. People tried to dissuade him from the idea, but he laughed them to scorn. "Just the very thing I've been trying for all my life," he remarked, in answer to their expostulations. "Only show me a downright bonâ fide ghost," he said, "and if it's a he, or if it's a she, I'll sign a three years' engagement with that ghost at ten, fifteen, and twenty pounds a week. What stunning double crown posters we would have out about it to be sure. Eh, Billy Van Post? 'The Ghost at Ranelagh: no augmentation of prices.' It would be tremendous." Mr. M'Variety, it will be remembered, lived slightly in advance of the period when every manager throughout the empire could have his ghost by application to Professor Pepper.

Mr. M'Variety, however, did not find it possible to add a "downright bonâ fide ghost" to the attractions of Ranelagh. His only nocturnal visitors were rats, and they, yielding to a judicious course of arsenical treatment, speedily left the Cottage in the prosaic phase of being rather an old-fashioned place, slightly rickety, and not very weather-tight. The manager, who had an eccentric fancy for occupying at least half a score of residences at the same time—his enemies ascribed to him as a motive for thus multiplying his domicile a desire to "dodge" the sheriffs of different counties who might possibly have judgments against him—took a fancy into

his head that the Cottage would be a snug little retreat when he was detained late in town, and a pleasant change for him when he was tired of his villa at Isleworth, his family residence in Brompton, his big house near Dorset-square, his chambers in Lyons Inn, and a queer little place, half office, half dwelling-house, he occupied in a triangular yard, beginning with a soap-boiler's and ending with a livery-stable, but dignified with the name of a square, and called after some saint, which he occupied in the wilds of Finsbury, somewhere between London-wall and Bishopsgate.

He soon grew tired of the Cottage, however, and said that it gave him the blues. He christened it the "Dismal Swamp." He was, perhaps, disappointed at finding no ghosts about the premises. After a few weeks, he ceased to reside there, and abandoned it to the occupation of the celebrated Albino Family, from the Valley of Dappes. The Albino Patriarch, his wife, and four children, all with fuzzy heads of hair, like spun glass, all with pink eyes, violet gums, teeth of a pale mauve, and ass's milk complexions, lived here for a while. They were very quarrelsome, and from black eyes and contused noses distributed among them by the Patriarch (who drank), were frequently rendered unfit for exhibition. After this they returned to the Valley of Dappes, where the youngest Albino girl, being alone on the top of a high mountain tending goats, was fortunate enough, in an ecstatic vision, to have an interview with Saint Teresa of Lima, who informed her that the Valley of Dappes was going to the devil, through the deplorable addictedness of the population to drinking hard cider and reading the *Siècle* newspaper on the Sabbath-day. She forthwith became a miracle; the clergy took her up; Monseigneur the Bishop absolutely condescended to issue a mandement about her, gently hinting that people who didn't believe in miracles in general, and St. Teresa of Lima in particular, were babes of perdition, and candidates for perpetual brimstone; and the whole family did much better than when they were at Ranelagh, the pink-eyed Patriarch drinking more freely than ever.

After their departure, and a brief interregnum, during which nobody to speak of, save a mouldy man in a snuff-coloured coat, a Scotch cap, and a red worsted comforter, the fringes of which he used as a pocket-handkerchief, who had his dinner (generally consisting of tripe, liver, or some other visceral matter) sent him daily in a basin, drank cold coffee out of a black bottle labelled "rue gin," read with great persistency a pamphlet containing a report of the murder of Lord William Russell by Benjamin Courvoisier, and was stated to be in the employ of the Sheriff of Surrey—after the transitory occupation of the Cottage by this personage, another family were billeted there by the hospitable Mr. M'Variety. These were the Ouli Zoug Zoug Arabs from Mecca. There was a grandfather, who was a sheikh, and wore a green turban, but was one night recognised

by a stray tourist as having been head shampooper at a bath in Cairo. The same tourist declared that the sheikh's eldest son had frequently attended on him in the capacity of a donkey-boy at Alexandria; that the sheikh himself, in the intervals of shampooing, was in the habit of relating improper stories, receiving payment in copper for the same, that the mother and her two daughters had belonged to the honourable fraternity of *Almé*, and that one particular houri, with the biggest black eyes ever seen out of a sloe-bush, whose vocation it was to sit cross-legged, in very baggy trousers, on a divan, and smoke a hubble-bubble, was an Algerian Jewess, who had formerly kept a little shop for the sale of sham sequins, and attar of roses even more spurious, in Marseilles. Be it as it may, the Ouli Zoug Zoug Arabs from Mecca were, for a time, very instrumental in filling Mr. M'Variety's treasury. It was a great sight to see the sheikh, with his very big green turban, and his very long white beard, strumming on a species of banjo—the Arab mandolin, I presume—while the Jewess smoked her *narghilé*, and the daughters danced the shawldance, kicking off their yellow slippers, and letting down their back hair in the most exciting passages, while the old woman, who had a pair of moustaches which would have done honour to a grenadier of the Old Guard, handed coffee round to the visitors at a shilling a cup; and the son, who had been a donkey-boy, executed complicated sarabands and back somersaults, uttering, meanwhile, the cries of his native country. The family were strict Mahomedans, and when they ate butchers' meat, which was seldom, a sheep was purchased for them, which they killed on the premises. You paid sixpence extra to see the sheikh grovelling on his prayer carpet: and the ladies never appeared in the promenade in the Gardens after the performance, without being strictly veiled. It was, however, unfortunately discovered that even the tourist was wrong in his shampooing theory, and that the sheikh was an Irishman, who had been discharged, not honourably, from the service of the Honourable East India Company. A newspaper exposure put an end to the performances of the Ouli Zoug Zoug Arabs. They essayed to work the provinces, first as Dancing Dervishes, and next as Maronite Christians fleeing from the cruel persecutions of the Turkish government; but were at last obliged to retire to Mecca, or Ireland, or obscurity.

And now the Cottage was occupied by Madame Ernestine, as the direct heir and next of kin, in a professional line, of the Ouli Zoug Zoug Arabs, stars of the East, whose light had waned and flickered and gone out, like many other lights of the other days of Ranelagh. But Madame Ernestine's star, at this moment, seemed to be in the ascendant, and Mr. M'Variety had paid full homage to her importance by furnishing the Cottage with many elegant articles which he had not vouchsafed to former occupants. He had fitted up the

largest apartment as a drawing-room, and flattered himself that he had done the thing in first-rate style. It is true that the carpet did not cover the whole of the room; but it was a bright red one, of a large pattern, with a fringe all round, and was thus a little suggestive of Indian splendour. The curtains of the windows were somewhat dingy and faded; but being lined with new pink calico, and tied up with yellow cord, with depending tassels, of the patterns which we see in portraits of military heroes, taken with a background of pillar and curtained sky, were indicative, particularly from the outside, of dainty elegance combined with magnificence. Mr. M'Variety had aimed at splendour rather than comfort, and, with this view, had introduced a great deal of lacquered brass and gilding into the apartment. There were heavy gilt cornices over the windows; an ormolu clock, with an obstinate partiality for half-past four, on the mantel-shelf; two or three rickety inlaid tables, with brass rosettes on their hips, and brass claws at the extremities of their legs; a tremendous ormolu chandelier, designed on a scale adapted to halls of dazzling light, and consequently altogether out of proportion to its present sphere, and a dozen or so of white and gold chairs, which had evidently, at one time or other, formed a portion of the costly furniture in the grand salon of a stage marquis. All this would doubtless have been very magnificent had not the effect been slightly marred by traces of the Albino Family and the Ouli Zoug Zougs on the walls and ceiling. Those traces consisted of stains and splashes upon the dingy paper, as if the Patriarch had been in the habit of throwing his heel-taps in the faces of the members of his amiable family, and missing his mark; and of dark smudges upon the ceiling, dimly suggesting that the Zoug Zougs had used the apartment as a dormitory, and been accustomed to go upon nocturnal hunting expeditions with a tallow candle. It was suggested by a certain person, that in order to have all things in keeping, it would be well to treat the walls to a new paper, and the ceiling to a pail of whitewash, but Mr. M'Variety would not hear of such a thing. "Never mind paper and whitewash," he said; "with all this gold about, and that magnificent chandelier, which cost a hundred pounds when new if it cost a penny, the room will look first-rate at night. When madame sits in one of those gilded chairs with her feet upon the back of that gilt stool, she'll think she is a countess in down-right earnest."

Two of the smaller apartments had been fitted up as bedrooms, one for Madame Ernestine and the other for Lily. The appointments of these rooms were in much better taste than those of the drawing-room. Lily's little dormitory was exceedingly neat and dainty. It was furnished all in white—a white carpet with a small blue forget-me-not running through it, white dimity curtains to the little bed, and a white muslin covering on the toilet-table, on which stood an oval looking-glass in a white enamelled frame, wreathed about with lace. Madame's

room was furnished with equal comfort and elegance, but more gaudily, and not in white.

Mr. M'Variety flattered himself that the countess would be charmed with her new abode, particularly after her residence in the humble salons of Mr. Kafooze. When he heard that she was coming over to take possession, he stationed himself in the carved porch to bid her welcome, and perhaps also to give himself the gratification of witnessing her delight and surprise. The countess did not make her appearance at the exact moment she was expected—she never did—but she came at length, wrapped in an elegant sealskin cloak, poor Lily following at her heels, carrying a handbox. The countess was magnificently dressed, and, through the softening medium of her veil, looked almost beautiful. She was in a passion as usual, and came up muttering something about *cette vicille ganache de Kafooze*.

"What's the matter now?" said Mr. M'Variety; "had any words with old Foozlum?"

"Old Foozlum, as you call him," said the countess, "is an owl, a toad, a bat, un oiseau de mauvais augure. Because I forgot the little riding-whip that Milord Carlton presented to me, and went back for it, he muttered something about his accursed stars, and said I should have no luck."

"But *you* don't believe in such nonsense?" said Mr. M'Variety, laughing.

"Believe! Bah! I believe in nothing," said the countess. "But it vexes me. Why should I have no luck? Dites-moi."

"Old Foozlum is wrong for once, countess," said Mr. M'Variety, "for luck's in your way. What do you think of this for a residence? Will it suit, eh?"

The countess surveyed the Cottage for a moment with a look of supreme contempt. "So," she said, "this is my castle! Un beau château, vraiment! A palace fit for a queen! Fit for a cow, fit for a pig, fit for any animal that Monsieur M'Variety may have reasons for accommodating with a residence in the Gardens of Ranelagh."

"Now don't say anything disparaging of the Cottage until you've seen the inside of it," said Mr. M'Variety. "Come up-stairs, and I'll show you the drawing-room. But stay, one moment; look at the porch first—a real bit of antiquity, and no mistake." And Mr. M'Variety proceeded to point out the carvings, and expatiate upon their merits as relics of antiquity and works of art.

The countess stamped her foot impatiently. "Allons, monsieur, entrons!" she said, "I don't like the porch. I don't admire it at all; it is cold and damp, like a dungeon. Ma parole d'honneur, it gives me the horrors!"

"Oh, very well; come in and see the drawing-room, you'll like that better." And the manager led the way.

The countess, jerking an impatient gesture to Lily, immediately followed him; but she had no sooner crossed the threshold than she paused, and violently grasped M'Variety's arm.

"What's the matter?" said the manager.

"Something, I know not what," said the countess; "a sudden chill;" and she shuddered and turned pale as she spoke.

"Come to the fire and warm yourself," said the manager; "it is a bitter cold day."

The countess did not reply immediately. She stood as if transfixed by some sudden thought. At length she said:

"I do not like this place. I shall not be happy here; it chills the marrow in my bones. What did the old fool say? That I should have no luck."

"Who," said Mr. M'Variety, "who'd have thought of you being superstitious!"

"I am not superstitious," she replied. "I am cold; give me some cognac."

"Ah, that's what you want," said the manager; "sit down a minute by the fire in Mrs. Snuffburn's room, and I'll bring over a bottle."

Mrs. Snuffburn, a thin, gaunt, ghostly woman, very deaf, with red eyes and a shrill voice, was at the door of her apartment—which was the kitchen—awaiting the arrival of her new mistress. She stood in the doorway, stiff and solemn, like a beckoning spectre. The countess, though faint and ill, could not help commenting in her usual flattering manner upon the housekeeper's appearance. "Ah, quelle horrible vieille!" she exclaimed. "C'est une sorcière!"

Mrs. Snuffburn, being innocent of the slightest acquaintance with foreign tongues, probably took this as a compliment, for she immediately handed the countess a chair, and said, in as kindly a voice as she could command:

"Sit 'e down, ma'am, do, and warm yourself, for you look mortal cold, to be sure."

The countess sat down before the fire, put her foot upon the fender, and rested her head upon her hand. Lily had never seen her so dejected, so softened. She put down the handbox, and quietly approached her chair.

In a timid, faltering voice, Lily said, "Can I do anything for you ma—madame?"

The countess, without moving or turning round, took the girl by the hand, and drew her towards her. Poor Lily was startled and half alarmed, for the woman grasped her hand fiercely, though with something of tenderness. But the next instant, when Mr. M'Variety came bustling in with the cognac, she flung the little hand from her and pushed Lily away. "Quick," she said, holding out her hand for the glass, "or I shall do something that will make me ashamed of myself."

What was there that she, Valérie à la Beugleuse, the stable-girl of Marouille; she, the wife of Griffin Blunt, the roué, the sharper, and the debauchee; she, the sham countess and heartless adventuress, the wild woman of Venti-millioni's show, Madame Ernestine, the brandy-drinking exponent of the haute-école in the circus at Ranelagh—what was it that she would be ashamed of?

Was it the weakness of allowing one spark of human womanly feeling to glow for one moment

at her heart of ice; the crime of permitting that heart to melt to the extent of a single tear? It may have been. She drank off three glasses of brandy one after the other, as they were handed to her by her obsequious manager. Then rose, stood erect, and with a wave of her hand cast her thoughts and her feelings away from her, as one would cast a pebble into the sea. "C'est fini," she said; "I am better now. Let us go and view the château."

Mr. Variety seemed to be quite relieved when the countess recovered her ordinary humour; for the mood into which she had been sinking perplexed and troubled him. He was troubled as he would have been if a performing horse of his, noted for kicking and throwing his rider, had suddenly shown a disposition to be docile and steady.

The manager led the way to the drawing-room, and the countess followed briskly, singing a snatch of a gay reckless French song.

"What do you say, countess, is this your style?" he said, as he threw open the door of the gilded apartment. The proprietor of ten thousand extra lamps had not miscalculated the effect of the gilding and the brass cornices and the ormolu chandelier. The countess was delighted.

"C'est magnifique, c'est charmant!" she said. "Monsieur M. Variety, you are the prince of managers, and be assured that the disinterestedness of your regard for me has my highest consideration. You are a pattern to your profession, mon bon enfant, and I hope, when you die, you will be stuffed and put into a museum as an encouragement to managers. Ah! I see your honest face mantle with gratification at the doing of a good deed; but, ma foi, I have known managers who, if they had caught themselves performing a virtuous action, would have said their prayers for once in their lives, and asked to be forgiven. But you—vous êtes la perle des entrepreneurs."

"Thank you, countess. I'm very much obliged to you," said Mr. M. Variety, with a knowing look; "I'm glad you appreciate what I have done for you; for you see I've got the Cottage up regardless of expense. Come and see the bedrooms. This one's for you; a snug crib, ain't it? light, comfortable, and airy, with elegance into the bargain."

"Charmante! charmante!" The countess was pleased, or feigned to be pleased, with everything.

"And this little one," said Mr. M. Variety, leading the way into the dainty white chamber, "is for missy."

"For missy!" said the countess. "Pourquoi? Because it is all in white? Why not for me? White is the emblem of purity, is it not? Why not for me then, monsieur? Ha!" And she grinned that horrible grin of hers.

"Oh, well," said the manager, "if you like this one best, you can have it. Please yourself, countess, but I thought you would prefer the large one."

"Monsieur Mac," said the countess, tapping

the manager on the arm with her riding-whip, "you did not think anything of the kind. I am not a fool, Monsieur Mac; but no matter, the imp shall have this dainty room; the little devil shall be rolled in snow. She shall be my guardian angel." And she leered at the manager knowingly as she spoke.

Mr. M. Variety had seen a good many theatrical mothers and guardians in his time; he knew how heartless, how ruthless, how rapacious they were; but he had never known one to equal this terrible Frenchwoman. He was very glad to escape from her to the bustle of his managerial duties, in which he was accustomed to forget many things in connexion with his profession which it was not pleasant to dwell upon and think about.

When he had gone, the countess called for Lily. The girl entered the room timidly and doubtfully.

"Come forward, child," said the countess; "nearer, close to me. There. Listen. I am your mother. Do you hear that?"

Lily answered with a faint "Yes."

"Your father," continued the countess, "was a scoundrel, a cheat, a beggar. He deceived me, beat me like a dog, degraded me, and at last left me to the mercy of the world. He died as he had lived—a beggar—and yet he left me a legacy. Do you know what that legacy was?"

The countess repeated the question fiercely, and Lily answered falteringly, "No."

"Then I will tell you," said the countess. "You were that legacy. Do you understand? No? Then you shall. I am your mother, you are my daughter. It is the duty of a daughter to obey her mother in all things. You shall obey me in all things. Do you hear?"

Lily stood before her mother, trembling and with downcast eyes, and answered, "I hear."

NOSES OUT OF JOINT.

It is not pleasant to have anything out of joint. A finger out of joint can neither wear diamonds nor darn a stocking; a shoulder out of joint cannot carry a musket nor a hod—scarcely a shoulder-knot or an epaulette; Pisgah cannot be climbed if the foot or the ankle, the hip or the knee, has started from its socket; but the most uncomfortable, though not the most unserviceable, of all is when the nose is put out of joint, as it is so often, by the intervention of a foreign body between it and its aspirations. For years you go on in your appointed path of life with your nose in perfect order. It may be Roman, or it may be Grecian, aquiline perhaps, or perhaps only a common-place snub, but it is straight, at all events, and with bones and cartilages undamaged; when suddenly Fate doubles her fist and gives you a tremendous blow, putting your nose out of joint for the rest of your natural term.

Take the example, known more or less intimately to us all, of the favourite brother or sister to whom you were everything in the un-

broken life of home and your first youth—the pet, the confidant, the twin cherry, the double life, the second self—all, in short, that one human soul could be to another. Your nose has ruled a straight line in this direction all your life as yet, and you never looked for a deviation. And would never have had one, you say in your wrath, if brother Charley had not met with that fascinating little puss of his, down in Northamptonshire where he went by such mere chance to pay a Christmas visit; or if sister Emmy had not fallen in love with that handsome scamp of a barrister, with whiskers bigger than his briefs, and a power of persuasion far beyond his powers of law, to whom Mrs. Scott introduced her (interfering old fool!) at Chiswick. And then what became of your noses, you poor betrayed fraternalists?

Marriage, indeed, often puts noses out of joint; not only the one favourite's, but all sorts of noses belonging to all sorts of people. When my friend Wellbeloved married, he had a whole row of them, very badly dislocated, as the ornaments round his wedding-cake. Spiritually treated, that is; emblemised in orange flowers and silver Cupids, but noses out of joint in essence and indwelling spirit, whatever they were in seeming. His sister's was the biggest, perhaps—the youngest sister, with whom he had always been paired ever since their nursery days; but there was also her little son's, his only nephew, assigned his heir from his birth by far-seeing mamma naturally transferring her claim on dear Wellbeloved to young master, who could continue it. And then there was his friend Harry's, and Harry's wife's—a nearer friend still, if report was true of all that had been in the times before Harry married, and when Mrs. Harry had to choose between love and esteem, Harry and Wellbeloved, and chose the former, not repenting. And there was the pet niece's; a pretty little round Roxalana nose, which had always stood high in his good graces, in fact, higher than any other save his sister's, and a good many centigrades above his nephew's, though, like a prudent man able to bridle an unruly member, he concealed that fact, not wishing to have caps pulled before his face, and in his quiet way playing off one against the other, and keeping up the ball with all. (Be it remembered that all this time Wellbeloved was rich, of middle age, of easy temper, and unmarried.) When he saw Miss Merrybird, she put their respective noses out of joint in half an hour. A bright, cheery, blue-eyed, and golden-haired little bird as it was, too! who hopped on to the perch held out for her without the smallest hesitation, and sat there as contentedly as if she had been born on it and knew no other. And when her pretty rosy beak had destroyed the symmetry of all the rest, Wellbeloved found to his cost how many people had loved him for what they could get out of him, and how few for himself independent of their own gain. He did not break his heart at the discovery, though he opened his eyes and wondered in his soul. With little Miss Merrybird perched on his

finger, or nestling against his shoulder, he was perfectly indifferent to everything else, and though he would willingly have dealt in soothing plaisters—and did, largely, plaisters of a fine ripe golden colour and brilliant metallic shine—yet, as he could not undo his real offence and make Mrs. Wellbeloved Miss Merrybird again, he could not build up broken bridges to the angle of the past, and so never got completely forgiven.

This instance, however, is of the graver manner of dislocation, affecting not only the pleasure but the very conditions and continuance of lives. For Wellbeloved's favourite sister, not able to assign young master a certain heirship on this side the united escutcheon, went down to Leicestershire, to live within the range of old Foxtail's vision: Foxtail being her deceased husband's uncle, also unmarried, past middle age, and childless: hoping that her powers of fascination, which were not small, might consolidate themselves into a fat codicil in this quarter. Which they did; and so firmly, that young master came into the possession of Foxtail Hall when the old man died, learnt the noble art of hunting, and broke his poor young neck one day before it had well settled itself into its manly stock. And the pet niece, withdrawn from undesirable society by her enraged parent—Wellbeloved's eldest sister, who had a spirit, and was proud of it—fell into the hands of Signor Grazie, professor of many arts at Milan, and became that most miserable of all created things, an expatriated British female, with her heart in the English lanes, a wife with a husband of a strange religion, friends of a foreign tongue, and children more their Italian grandmamma's than her own. All because of Miss Merrybird and her golden ringlets, and Uncle Wellbeloved's soft big heart.

Friends often put out other friends' noses. There was that affair of the Blanks with my Lord and Lady Fivestars, that I happened to know of, having seen and studied it from the beginning to the end, attentively. The Blanks had been greatly patronised by my Lord and Lady Fivestars—kind people in their way, and generous, but a little fitty, and not a little inconstant. However, the Blanks' reign was a bright one while it lasted, and they had no cause to complain. Mr. Blank was an indifferent portrait painter, and Lady Fivestars used to introduce him to all her friends as the modern Raphael; and Mrs. Blank was an authoress, and Lord Fivestars once crowned her as Corinna in the conservatory; and on their side the Blanks were fluttered and flattered out of all the little common sense they ever possessed—which was not much—and if they did not walk on their heads it was not for want of despising their feet. In the end they came out of their flutter, and then they drifted into that most dangerous of all stagnations—security. They forgot to be subservient; they diminished the profundity of their kowtows; they laid aside the pretty alphabet, all flowers and flourishes, with which they had hitherto spelt out their adoration of my

lord and lady, and their undying appreciation of the good that lay in them; they resumed their natural balance, and were no longer cephalopods but honest bipeds, such as Nature had made them; but they flattened their own noses in the process irretrievably. The Scotch doctor of the establishment called them pawky; my Lord Fivestars said they were scrubby; and my lady, with more delicacy if less discrimination, sighed as she confessed they had grown unpleasant, and she did not know what had come to them, they were so changed. In fact, their noses were falling out of joint by their own weight, when the introduction of their friends Mr. and Mrs. Dash completed the dislocation. Mr. and Mrs. Dash were newer, cleverer, more versatile, and more vivacious than the Blanks. They had talent in the histrionic line (my Lord and Lady Fivestars were great patrons of talent in all lines), and they could amuse a dinner-table or a supper party better than could Mr. Blank with his artistic hair, and his tepid réchauffé of Ruskin very weakly done, or than Mrs. Blank with her political lectures and awful enthusiasm for "causes." And so they flattened their dear friends' the Blanks' noses straight to their faces, and Lord and Lady Fivestars never even tried to raise them up again. But ever after this the Blanks became tremendous democrats; and the "insolence of a bloated aristocracy" was a kind of monogram sealing Corinna's effusions with the indelible and undeniable stamp of ownership.

The Blanks did the same kind of thing on their side; for, as the humblest parasite has a humbler parasite still battenning upon its translated juices, so the most devoted toadies have their own toadies a step lower; and the noses that get put out of joint in the drawing-room, tweak others awry in the lobby. The Blanks had their pet, young Silvertongue of the R. I. O., whom they patronised considerably, and about whom they rejoiced to talk nonsense and prophesy absurdities, after the manner of those who delight in reflected lights, whether from above their heads or beneath their feet. But his nose was put out of joint, just as theirs had been at Fivestars Court. Mr. Minim, also of the R. I. O., was one day, unluckily for poor Silvertongue, introduced to the Blanks, where he sang bass to the younger man's tenor, and carried it clean over his head by the strength of more sonorous vocal chords, and a more generous laryngeal arrangement. Henceforth it was Minim and not Silvertongue who was to revolutionise the musical world with the voice of an Apollo in a circumscribed register. Silvertongue was all very well, but his organ was being impaired by injudicious work; it had grown woolly, it had become metallic, it was tinkling, it was husky, it was harsh, it was piping, it was everything but what it had been when his nose went straight on end to the skies, and before Minim threw his masculine vocalisation into the adverse scale. Now Minim was everything, and Lablache and Ronconi were nowhere. I need hardly say that no one shared in this reputation of the Blanks. I never knew

of either gentleman coming out from the ruck of the chorus at the wings, where they did their business satisfactorily but in no wise remarkably, certainly free from censure by the authorities, but quite as free from praise.

This kind of nasal see-saw is very common with public men—the popular preacher, the fashionable doctor, the favourite author, or the beloved of the opera-house or the theatre. For a long time Mr. Whiteband is the minister under whose ghostly training you are making yourself a Christian athlete, ready and able for any amount of combats with Apollyon and his crew. No one is equal to him in power, or grace, or unction; he stirs your heart as no one else has done, he softens your conscience and enlightens your understanding, and you feel that the grace of a soul redeemed is due mainly to Mr. Whiteband, and his precious discourses. But one day you are induced to go and hear Mr. Blackhood. He too is a ghostly trainer of note, and has done wonders in his time, and with sinners more hardened than yourself. You go to hear him, and you are struck; you go again, and you are knocked down; and by that blow, which prostrates your inner being, Mr. Blackhood flattens Mr. Whiteband's nose and puts it out of joint definitively. You transfer your congregational allegiance; you vacate your long accustomed seat; you go through spiritual exercises of quite a different character, but which you declare to be more bracing, and better suited to your special condition: and Mr. Whiteband is left to mourn a deflection of which he understands nothing; knowing only this, which is poor consolation at the best, that it has been by no fault of his own he has lost his adherent, and had his ministerial nose put out of joint so cruelly.

So it is with your doctor—the man into whose broad bosom you have poured out your secrets—the tale of your husband's ill temper and your children's undesirable proclivities, and Mary Jane's impertinence, and Amelia Ann's cousin in the Life Guards—the man whose very presence you have often declared gave you life, and for whose daily coming you have looked, as a fire-worshipper looks for the rising of the sun. All this and more has your favourite doctor been to you, for the space of months or years, according to the natural muscularity of your constancy. And then your friends persuade you to try the treatment of another medical hero, and one of their own adoring. Nothing will do for you but a total change of system, plunging from Turkish baths to cold douches, or front the horse play of the Allopaths of Dr. Sangrado's school to the subtle essences of homœopathy, which you swallow by faith not knowledge. You do so: perhaps with no result: perhaps with decidedly evil results; but you do not retreat. You may change and change again, and never be fixed with a medical attendant firmly rooted all your life after, but you will scarcely go back to the old broken nose love—for noses once broken are hard to mend, and no one likes to consort with them

while fractured. All medical men, like all ministers of floating congregations, are for ever getting their noses put out of joint; but they are not eels in general, and do not, so far as I know, become accustomed to the process, nor indifferent to its discomfort.

It is the public, and not a mere private individual here and there, that regulates the nasal line of operatic and theatrical stars; but there is always a succession of noses out of joint with them, each new star eclipsing all the former ones, unless of the first magnitude, and sending their noses as flat as peacocks' tails in the rain. But they are almost the only people whose noses are elastic, and able to spring back again to the original arch after flattening by rivals. And with them a new piece, with only a fine dress or a striking attitude in it, will put everything straight again, like one of those india-rubber faces when you take away your thumbs, and let the face go back to its original condition.

But perhaps the place where noses get the hardest of these thumps and bumps, is in the country, where there is a local tendency to hero-worship, and the cordial recognition of home-made gods, if not the preference. There are always certain Aristoi in a country place—the Best of their kind and class—Brahmins of beauty or talent or grace or wealth, which society there accepts as its culminating point—ideals from which, according to some of the simpler sort, there is no beyond. For instance, there is Miss Lucy, the declared beauty of Littletown, the finest and handsomest and dearest and gracefullest young lady as ever was or ever could be. It would be little less than high treason to hint at any flaw in Miss Lucy's perfections. Her dress is a model of taste and elegance, combined with practicability and economy: does she not go twice a year to her cousins at Canonbury, in London, bringing home the fashions, which all the milliners and shopkeepers' wives of Littletown incontinently copy, and never by any chance make to come right or like the original? And has she not the thickest and longest and loveliest golden hair in the world? It is a tradition down there that Truefitt once offered her five pounds if she would only let him cut off enough to make a coronet for a duchess who had commissioned him for a tail of that exact shade, no matter what the cost. And has she not the clearest and deepest blue eyes, just the colour of very good sapphires? and the trimmest waist, and the smallest feet for miles round? Old Last, the head shoemaker of Littletown, always exhibits Miss Lucy's shoes and boots as models of what shoes and boots should be, and as he could make them too, if all feet were what they ought to be. And so Miss Lucy's reign has been undisturbed for this last six or seven years (for beauties reign long in the country), and would have remained undisturbed to the end of her generation, if Miss Bella Belinda had not come whisking down one day on a visit to the vicar, and shown the poor benighted natives what

taste and beauty and fashion really were. Miss Bella Belinda had lived in Paris; she had seen Rome and Florence, and Naples and Geneva; it was her boast that not an article of her attire was English, and that she was foreign all over, from her hat to her boots—which were smaller than Miss Lucy's, of daintier material and of neater make.

Imagine the state of poor Miss Lucy's nose after the arrival of Miss Bella Belinda! Her golden curls went down in the Littletown market to the price of tow; her eyes were only porcelain beads imitative of turquoise, and no longer precious stones of the value of lapis lazuli or sapphires; she was all very well, you know, but nothing so very particular after all; and then she had decidedly gone off these last few years. Miss Lucy was, let me see—yes! Miss Lucy was certainly eight-and-twenty if she was a day, and young ladies at eight-and-twenty have turned the corner, and are travelling down hill a little. Now Miss Bella Belinda was very different. There was a young lady worth looking at if you like! Look at her hair and her eyes and her hands and her skin, and, in short, look at all that was hers, and then uphold Miss Lucy as *prima donna* if you liked! Poor Miss Lucy!—Lucy Poocey as her friends used to call her—she learnt the fickleness of popular favour and the theory of noses out of joint as well as the most notorious hero with a smashed pedestal, lying prostrate on the ground with his nose in the mud, instead of turned proudly up to heaven, sniffing the sweet odours of gum-benjamin burning in the censers swinging beneath. But she was good-natured, partly because she was indifferent and lazy; so she took suit and service in Miss Bella Belinda's court.

The young men in the country go through the same kind of thing. Young Thomson, and Johnson, and Smithson, are all very well—oh! very well indeed! while there are no fresh importations, and they stand undisturbed in their quality as native beaux; but let an irruption come—let the neighbouring town receive a garrison—let a party of Cantabs come down to read during the Long—let young Sir Fred Norman take Tumbledown Hall and convert it into a shooting-box for the season, with plenty of pleasant fellows and jolly parties to help the dulness of Littletown—and then look at our young natives' noses, and see to their condition of flatness!

It is the same thing with the reigning belle of the county balls, when another belle flashes into her sphere; the same when little sissy comes, and poor little brother's nose is put out in the nursery where it has ruled the whole house with its tiny knob for nearly two years now; the same when Miss Petlove changes her doctor or her minister, and when Mr. Loycall changes his ideal; the same when the long "affair" of many years—that enduring flirtation of half a lifetime—suddenly breaks off, not in the pleasant consummation of matrimony, but into the divergence of a new thread

lately introduced into the skein; the same when any favourite whatever has to undergo snubbing by a rival, and a smashed nose in consequence.

A TARTAR MOSQUE.

EVERY week of my stay at Moscow I had been resolving to go to the Friday morning service at the Tartar mosque. At last I one day determined to increase no longer the pavement of a place below me by any further fruitless good resolutions, so summoned my irritable, idle, and grumbling valet de place to my heel—much as an angry man does his runaway pointer on a September morning, when the bright keen air is all alive with partridges—and sallied off, across the stone bridge below the Kremlin, to that quiet suburb of the Holy City, wherein, I had been informed, stood a small Tartar mosque, where a small migratory congregation of Moslems worshipped every Friday.

Herr Schlafrig, my German valet de place aforesaid, who was vexed at my sudden promptitude, and at the prospect of a long and dusty walk, sulkily informed me, with the torpid dulness of a much-bored man, that there were about a hundred and thirty Tartars living in Moscow, and some forty Persians. The former were all true believers of the Koran and the Mahomedan traditions, the rest Shiites or heretical followers of Ali. The mosque belonged to the orthodox men; as for the heretics, they performed their devotions privately in the house of a merchant of their own sect. All these Tartars and Persian exiles were either coachmen, or sellers in the bazaars of dressing-gowns of Bokharian silk. In St. Petersburg, where Tartars were less numerous, the true believers met for weekly prayer in the house of an orthodox merchant. The great mosques were, however, in the Crimea and at Kasam.

Moscow, the city of churches, never seemed to me so beautiful and so picturesque as it did that fine September morning. We had passed down the street of the Smith's Bridge—the Regent-street of Moscow—famous for its jewellers' shops, confectioners, and music-sellers; and, passing through an embattled gate that pierced a long line of white rampart, had reached the great dusty square that girdles round the strange towers and Chinese-looking battlements of the Kremlin enclosure. Before us was that pagoda-like pile of striped and coloured spires and domes, reared by Ivan the Terrible to show the fantastic prodigality of his architectural imagination, and of which that crowned brute is said to have been so proud that he put out the eyes of the Italian who built it, lest he should erect any rival temple that might surpass it. There it was, with its green and golden turbans of cupolas, and its bulbous spires, crowned with rough blossoms of iron thistles, that shone in the royal sunshine. On one side of us was the Holy

Gate of the Kremlin, through which even the emperor may not pass without doffed hat. The dusky sacred picture and the eternal lamp above the portal, that even the flames which drove Napoleon from his prey, could not deface. Now, we are lower down, and on the bridge. Below us rippled the shallow fretting stream. Those great hamper in the water were fish preserves. Above us, on the opposite bank, rose the Kremlin towers—half Indian, half Chinese in character—unaltered since the clouds of Tartars howled at the sight of them. That great gilt roofed tower was the Tower of Ivan Veleki. Those gilded domes, clustering together, were the roofs of the sacred churches—St. Michael the Archangel, the Uspenski-Sabor, and their companions. Great clouds of dust rose as there came racing over the bridge, flocks of telegas and country carts, mere long narrow cradles, mounted on rude wheels; in those cradles, lined with hay, sat country women in sheepskin coats, and with coloured handkerchiefs bound round their heads, good-natured stupid-looking creatures, bound to Moscow to sell birch-wood, or to do shopping on the humblest scale. After them trotted by, a lancer with a red and yellow pennon fluttering from the lance at his elbow, an open carriage full of German tourists, or a crowd of shock-headed burly peasants, already half drunk, clumsy and noisy, but still abject and civil, to all they met. Now, the bridge left behind us, and the Kremlin hidden by houses, we plunged into the suburbs. No dreary stucco palaces now, no gymnasium, no academy for cadets, no barrack: only quiet soft unpaved roads, bordered by small houses and gardens, the walls generally of plank, not always painted. One of the longest and prettiest of all the streets was Tartar-street. But it revealed so little sign of a mosque, that Schlafrig had to inquire (with a contemptuous look at me for proposing such an expedition) of a soldier, where it was. All at once we came to a green garden door, which Schlafrig pushed open contemptuously, and we found ourselves in a grassy court-yard, at one end of which stood a single-storied house, with a cumbrous ladder resting against the front wall, and steps leading to a side entrance. The roof of the building was formed, like other Russian roofs, of large plates of iron painted a dark chocolate red. It wanted by my watch five minutes to twelve. Now, I was sorry we were so late, because I knew that at half-past eleven on Fridays—the day on which the Moslems hold that Adam was created and died, and the day on which the general resurrection is to take place—the blind mueddin, or caller to prayer, would have ascended by that big ladder to that red roof, and have chanted the following supplication to the prophet:

"Blessing and peace be on thee, O thou of great dignity! O, apostle of God! Blessing and peace be on thee; to whom the Truth said, I am God; blessing and peace be on thee, thou first of the creatures of God, and seal of the apostles of God! From me be peace on

thee, on thee and on thy family, and on all thy companions."

And all this in a long-drawn, nasal chant, sonorous and far-reaching, which must have penetrated into every back room, and alcove and garden of every shawl-seller in that tranquil street. This chant would have taken the place of the daybreak or midnight call, to prayer, so, persistent, so Oriental, so wild, and so protracted. The "Come to prayer, come to prayer. Come to security. God is great, God is great. There is no deity but God. Prayer is better than sleep, prayer is better than sleep." All this I had missed; nor could I indeed see any congregation.

I looked in. Schlaftrig, evidently afraid of the Tartars, pulled me by the arm, and entreated me not to go a step nearer. In the porch were three pairs of slippers. Inside, in a large square perfectly plain room, lighted by three large square windows, and carpeted with Persian carpet, knelt the three turbaned owners of those three pairs of slippers, looking towards the niche that directed them to Mecca. They were as still as images, except every now and then, when a grave pale face turned towards the doorway, or when one of them suddenly bent forward and touched the carpet with his forehead. A dusty ill-cut glass chandelier hung from the roof, and a clumsy dark wooden chair, which served as a pulpit and a seat for the reader of the Koran, constituted all the furniture. The carpet was an old Persian carpet, still soft and rich, though its deep reds and blues had long since faded to a brownish white. The mosque had once boasted a carpet of enormous value, the glory of the looms of Ispahan, but some Muscovite dog had stolen it. May his grave be defiled, and the examining angels, Mumkar and Nekeer, when they come to question him in his grave, pummel him well with their maces of red-hot iron for robbing the poor church of the humble exiles!

All at once one of the three worshippers, who turned out to be the mueddin, or caller to prayer, rose from his knees, tucked his black beaded rosary in a fold of his great white turban, and gravely turning with an air of the profoundest and humblest piety, came to the door, shuffled his slippers on, and, coming out into the open air, turned his face towards Mecca, and then raising his open hands, palms outwards, to each side of his old face, and carefully touching the lobe of each ear with the thumb of each hand, began to screech the call to prayer which I have already given, with the most agonising and piercing acuteness that can be imagined. Without any apparent tendency to apoplexy, or even of blood to the head, without turning damson colour or getting red about the whites of his eyes, this detestable old man of the sea, intensely grave under the responsibility of being a whole peal of bells, a gong, and a brazen-lunged herald all in one, emitted his execrating nasal gush of Arabic, guttural and metallic by turns, hideous to the ears as ten cats fighting, irritating as the

screaching hiss of a knife-grinder's stone, and detestable as the noise of sharpening saws.

At first I felt a certain sudden heat rise in my blood tempting me at all hazards to rush at the gullet of the old man of the sea and choke him into silence. The next moment a tickling effervescence about the diaphragm compelled me to step round the angle of the mosque and cram my handkerchief into my mouth, so unexpected was the old man's appearance, and so outrageously discordant his performance.

At the same time a sub-current of graver thoughts passed through my mind. I felt a pity for these humble Publicans, who, far from the Greek Pharisees, with their jewelled pictures, gilt shrines, and countless tapers, came to this quiet retreat to turn their faces and their hearts to Mecca, and worship the God of their fathers in the old simple way first taught in the Arabian desert. Far otherwise had I seen the turbaned Moslem in the Lebanon, at Cairo, at Stamboul, and at Jerusalem, too ready in all those places to lay hand on his sabre, and, when he dared, to spurn the Christian under foot.

No huge-domed temple here, supported by pillars wrenched from Ephesian shrines, no great marble courts with fountains all in a grey flutter with favoured doves, no long pendent strings of silk tassels and ostrich eggs, no great scaffold network of lamps; no, here only the sober penury of the early Christians, and a worship unseen and unheeded of men. No galleried minarets here rose like Tamerlane's lances into the clear sky, no dervishes raved out prophecies against the ghaour, no sultans' tombs were here, covered with Indian shawls and crowned with diamond-crested turbans. No crowd of bare-armed servants hurried to lay the prayer carpets, to light the lamps, to fill the vessels for ablution, or to mount the minaret. There were no students here, reading the Koran; no groups of idlers sleeping, spinning, eating, as in the Egyptian mosques of an afternoon; these poor Tartars were in a hidden corner of the city of the most deadly of their enemies.

But now the worshippers began one by one to drop in, and I had no more time for comparisons. Every moment the green garden door creaked open, and some man or lad entered, shuffled off his slippers, placed them in the doorway, and then, passing in, knelt in prayer; now it was an old shabby man, with the bent look of a mechanic; now a smart bright-eyed stripling, who entered with a jaunty and rather pert trip, thinking, I fear, more of his snow-white turban and the rosary that looped round his wrist, than of the prophet or the wives of Eblis. Presently a mere ceremonialist slid in, his mind still preoccupied with the price of rose-attar, and his eyes wandering round on the strangers, or oftener on a poor pariah, who, less virtuous than Lazarus, and almost more degraded, knelt apart, far behind the rest, in the light of the window furthest from the niche which showed the direction of Mecca.

This pariah was a tall lean man, with a pale skull-like face, bare shaven head, and poverty-stricken dress, of which the oddest feature was a white shirt, worn over ragged European trousers. He knelt with downcast head and clenched hands, hardly daring to look round him. He was a Tartar sent from the great prison at Moscow, under guard of a soldier, to attend his devotions at the mosque of his nation. There was the grim stupidly-contemptuous soldier in his brown-grey great-coat and yellow facings, watching him luridly from the doorway, a straw between his great horse teeth, and a spiked helmet on his ugly bullet of a half-reclaimed Tartar head. Eventually this warrior lay down in the sun, tried to look watchful and intelligent, and, exhausted by that intense mental effort, fell fast asleep, and snored like an afreet or a ghoul after a heavy churchyard meal.

By this time some thirty Tartars had assembled, and were kneeling in a row before the niche, which, in the mosques of these image-worshippers, is always perfectly bare and unadorned, being merely intended to serve as a compass to mark the direction to Mecca. Most of the men were kneeling back and resting their hands upon their knees in the prescribed way. Others occasionally bent gravely forward till their foreheads touched the ground, and then arose equally gravely and slowly. All this is part of a religious drill, in which every movement of the foot, hand, or head, is studied and prescribed. Had I not known the Moslem ritual, I should have thought the movements unmeaning; but I knew the silent prayer with which it was accompanied, and will describe it.

Let me take as my instance that fat full-fleshed evidently rich merchant who has just slipped off his shining patent leather overalls, and now waddles forward to the place where he means to kneel. He leaves an oppressive odour of musk as he moves along, showing that he has just emerged from the bath. His pelisse is of rich walnut-coloured silk, his turban of the finest cambric muslin, opaque only from the thickness of its folds. How soft and plump and white his hands are, how sharp and sleepy by turns are his little black eyes, how full of importance he is; he surely must be the great Pan Nam Jam himself, with the little round button on the top of his head, who ate apple-pie till the gunpowder ran out of the heels of his boots—that great potentate immortalised by Foote. How he spurns with his eye the poor cringing prisoner, how he ruffles along, as if every other Moslem owed him piles of sequins and handfuls of piastres.

See now! He stands erect facing the niche, and raising his open hands to the lobes of his ears, says to himself, "God is great—Allahoo Akbar!" Now, placing his hands together, like a soldier standing at ease, with bended head, he repeats, silently, the Fathah, or opening chapter of the Koran, or the short one hundred and twelfth chapter. He then again says, "God is great!" and as he says it, he places his hands with his

fingers spread upon his knees, and bends down till his head is level with his waist; and as he remains thus, he says three times, still to himself, "I extol the perfection of my Lord the great. May God hear him who praiseth Him; our Lord, praise be unto thee!" Then, raising his head, he exclaims, "God is great!" and drops softly on his knees, and, repeating the exclamation of praise, places his hands on the ground a little before his knees, and touches the ground with his forehead, between his two hands. While he performs this prostration, he repeats the "Allah Akbar" three times. He then raises his head and rests on his knees before he repeats the prostrations and the exclamations of praise. He then rises and repeats the whole ceremony, or Rekah, as it is called. After the second rekah, he rests on his knees, bending his left foot under him, and placing his hands upon his thighs, says to himself: "Praises are to God, and prayers, and good works. Peace be on thee, O prophet, and the mercy of God and his blessings. Peace be on us, and on all the righteous worshippers of God." Then raising the first finger of the right hand, he says: "I testify that there is no deity but God, and I testify that Mahomed is his servant and his apostle."

After this, which is the work of only two or three minutes, the Tartar merchant, looking first on his right shoulder and then on his left, repeats the words, "Peace be on you and the mercy of God." The benediction is addressed to the one hundred and sixty guardian angels, who, some say, attend and guard every true believer, and to all good Moslems present. This finished, the merchant repeats some petition of the Koran, holding his two hands before his face as if they formed a book, and then drawing them over his face, from the forehead downwards. Then he remains sitting, and as his big lips keep moving I know that the fat Pharisee is repeating verses of supererogation—the *Throne verse*, or the two hundred and fifty-sixth verse of the second chapter of the Koran—or repeating "God is most great" thirty-three times running; every time he says it a bead of his aloes-wood rosary slipping between his plump white fingers.

And now a strange dream comes into my head, and that is, that every one of those two rows of Moslems is one of the characters of the Arabian Nights. That fat merchant was the insolent oppressor of Sinbad; those three men next him are clearly the three Calenders; that boy is Aladdin, the smart and mischievous; before him stands the merchant who killed the Afrit's son with the date-stone. And the poor down-trodden prisoner is, I am sure, the unlucky confectioner who was condemned to death for that matter of the pepper in the cream tarts of the princess.

The constitution of the Mahomedan Church is very simple. In Constantinople, there is a Sheikh el Islam, a sort of national archbishop, who has great power, or rather used to have, and, in past times, helped to remove many a

sultan by steel or bowstring. In the Egyptian mosques there is always a nazir or warder, who is the trustee and manager of the houses, lands, and money, left to the mosque; and it is he who appoints and dismisses the doorkeepers, water-bearers, sweepers, and lamplighters. There are generally to the larger mosques two Imauns or lay-readers of the Koran; one of whom delivers the short sermon every Friday; but, in small mosques, like those at Moscow, the preacher and reader are one and the same person. These men can follow any trade, and are paid by the funds of the mosque, not by voluntary or involuntary subscriptions. They do not depend on the caprice of their congregation. They are ordinary tradesmen who, for a piastre or halfpenny, or, at the most, five piastres a month, recite five prayers a day, and preach the weekly homily. They are often, however, schoolmasters, professional readers of the Koran, or poor students. They have no authority over any one. They do not visit, or exhort, or perform any rites. They do not live apart or remain unmarried in order to devote their whole time to the objects of professional ambition, nor are they in any way tied indissolubly to their religious profession, nor do they arrogate to themselves any special infallibility of interpreting the Koran, or regulating other men's lives. The Mahomedan, in fact, is his own priest, and pays nothing to any religious teacher, trusting to the infallible Koran to guide him, and giving his alms and performing his pilgrimage unaided. The Imaun out of the mosque wears no special dress, and is no one. The people do not run to kiss his hand or his robe, as the Russian peasants do to their own brutally ignorant peasant priests. The mosques are open from daybreak till after sunset. Sometimes they are shut between the hours of prayer, especially in dirty weather, when the building might otherwise be polluted. Sometimes a mosque is left open all night, except the maksoorah or chancel, which is partitioned off. The Mahomedan performs his ceremonies with just as much unction in his own house as in the mosque. The mosque is a place where the attendants work, eat, sleep, and even live; and yet they venerate the place of prayer in spite of what we should consider an habitual desecration.

But to return to the service. The Tartars, kneeling two deep, had now completed their private prayers, and the old reader seated himself in the old arm-chair, and began reciting from memory, in Arabic, and with an abstracted air and a low guttural voice, the Soorak-el-Kahf, or eighteenth chapter of the Koran. Although Arabic is a majestic language, every word seemed to begin with a guttural in this chapter.

All at once he rose, and all the congregation rose and began more rekahs. Down went all the turbaned heads together, down at the same moment in perfect unison; tap, tap, tap, went all the

foreheads. Then came the sermon. In Cairo, or any city wrenched from the infidel, it is usual for the preacher to hold a wooden sword, point downward, in his hand, but in Moscow this ceremony was omitted. The sermon I understood too little Arabic to clearly follow. I gathered, however, that it was a general exhortation to a better life, garnished with Koran texts, abounding in Oriental repetition, and not devoid of the exuberant imagery of the East.

The concluding khutbeh, or bidding prayer, is, however, always the same, and ends thus, as I know from several Oriental travellers:

"O Lord, we have acted unjustly towards our own souls, and if thou do not forgive us and be merciful unto us, we shall surely be of those who perish. I beg of God the Great that he may forgive me, and you, and all the people of Mahomed, the servants of God. Verily God commandeth justice and the doing of good, and giveth what is due, and forbiddeth wickedness, and iniquity, and oppression. He admonisheth you that ye may reflect. Remember God—he will remember you—and thank him—He will increase your blessings. Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures!"

This having been said, all rose and bowed their turbaned heads, held their open hands before their eyes, drew them down their faces, and slowly dispersed. The three Calenders gathered up their rosaries from beside them; Aladdin's eyes sparkled as he sprang gleefully to his feet; Sinbad's persecutor shook his scented robes and put on his shining papooshes; the poor prisoner shrugged, writhed, and hung his head; and the Moslem congregation dispersed.

It seemed so bright and golden coming out of the porch into the glad sunshine, and the little grass-flowers in the court-yard were vibrating in the breeze with gratitude to God, and love to their fellow-creature, man. One by one the turbaned men in the striped silk caftans put on their robes and slippers and passed through the green door. And I could see here and there at the villa windows, little shaven heads dancing about with joy at the return of Father Abdallah or Father Alec. And by the time when I, Herr Schlafzig, the soldier, and our disreputable mauvais sujet, name unknown, had reached the bottom of the street, there was not a Tartar to be seen.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER XIX. THERSITES.

THE evening of Major Carter's little party, Fermor was dining with his fellows at mess. He had not spoken of it to them, but was surprised to find them all talking of it eagerly and vociferously. He was a little disgusted and inclined to revoke the "gentlemanly" patent he had so hastily issued. But it would have brought discredit on his own powers of judgment, and on this account he did not entertain the idea of that degradation very much.

They had not, however, all been asked. The regimental sluice had not, as it were, been lifted to let the flood tumble in a sort of deluge on the major's modest party, and lay the whole room under crimson water. He had exercised a nice selection, pulling them like flowers, by the aid of his Landed Gentry, and, with his wonderful discrimination, had asked half a dozen of the choicest men of the corps.

That very day that Showers, who was always playing Thersites in respect of Fermor, came home from leave. Fermor shivered as he saw him sitting opposite. He often thought how this man's coarseness and low manners would force him to quit the regiment. And yet this very Captain Showers was liked by the other men. He had a loud, strong voice, with a fat face and large mouth, on which he produced laughs by very much the action of a forge bellows. He was always telling "good things," and "good stories,"—stories without spine or stamina, but which the simple souls about him roared at. Such of them as had heard of Hood or Hook, and the one or two who had met the jokes of Sydney Smith in books, placed him far above those humorists.

Through this dinner he was busy detailing adventures, and studded them over pretty thickly with "good things," like silver buttons on a court suit. Not merely "good" things, but "capital" things, and even the "very best things you ever heard in your whole life." Of which last class several were accumulated even in that one night, which must have made it an evening very remarkable to think of and look back to, for long after. It was not until this stock was exhausted, and they had adjourned to

their ante-room, that he began to cast about him for his favourite subject, Fermor.

"Well, Fermor," said Thersites, turning suddenly on him, "what made you go and break the horse's back? Eh? What had he done to you?"

"I broke no horse's back," said Fermor, with quiet dignity. (It was odd, he believed even to the end that there was a magic power in this manner of his that could awe the profane.) "If you had taken the trouble to pick up the details, you would have heard a different story." And pleased with this retort he turned to his evening paper again, and began to read.

Thersites, not in the least disturbed, worked his forge bellows into many grins, looking round on the company, and began again.

"And I am told, I say, Fermor—I am told you got into a house among a lot of fine girls—best bedroom, and all that—sisters on the stairs with the gruels and codlings—mamma settling the pillow. I don't believe a word of it. You're too proper a man."

A chorus of boys sitting taking in more drink and smoke than was good for their age, broke in with delight, "Oh, who told you that?"

Fermor, brought up to believe that truth was the most gentlemanly of a gentleman's virtues, said, coldly and seriously, "If you are alluding to the family who so kindly took care of me when I was ill, I must request—as a *favour*," added Fermor, leaning ironically on the word, "that the subject will not be pursued." He had cast this bolt in his best manner, as it appeared to him.

The other, however, was not to be disposed of so easily. "I see," he said; "private grounds. Visitors are requested not to walk on the grass, eh, Fermor?"

"I don't follow you," said Fermor, again rising out of his newspaper. "There are no visitors here, and I can see no grass."

Some of the boys tittered at this. They always enjoyed these little scuffles between the pair. Thersites, like all professional jesters, was nettled at what he considered his habitual target becoming animated and returning his fire. "How smart we are!" he said, becoming personal; "how sharp we are! Come, did *they* teach you? Four lessons a guinea? How many days were you in class? Which of them gave lessons, eh?"

This was received with loud laughter. Fermor,

getting redder, still looked round from one to the other with a curling lip.

"A most *original* joke," he said, with an attempt at bitterness. "You are improving every day."

"I only repeat what was told me, and what is reported in the town."

"And what do they report in the town? Pray go on," said foolish Fermor. "O pray go on."

"Well," said the other, "as you ask me; you then did your best to cut out another fellow—that heavy built man with the large horse—and tried on the looks and graces and a whole dressing-case full of arts. And when you thought you had all safe they suddenly and coolly turned you out. So I think, my dear fellow, to betaking up the championship of such people who have behaved in this way, is being rather too good natured. I only tell you this for your own good, you know."

The delight of the audience at this point knew no bounds. A low-born, ungentelemanly set—he would give the world to mortify them, and put them down.

"Before the man with the large horse our poor friend had to beat a retreat. Of course he couldn't contend with the large man. A good fortune, I am told. O, these women, Fermor, these women! I hope it will be a lesson to you."

Fermor could scarcely contain himself any longer. If he put up with this much more it would become a standing tyranny. "What wise people you all are," he said. "From beginning to end there's not a grain of truth in it."

"Don't be sure of that," said the other, sharply. "They all heard the same, too. At any rate, that marriage is all settled, and Twigg here saw the pair walking about the town together. So, my dear friend," he added, rising, "dry your eyes, for your pipe is completely put out."

Again came forth the roar at Fermor's expense, making his ears tingle. "You're going to this party to-night?" he said.

"Well!" said the other, looking round from the door.

"Well," said Fermor, "I'm going too; and we shall see whether, to use your forcible language, my pipe is put out, as you say." This was received with a sort of jeer.

Fermor went to his room chafing in a flurry of agitation. "It is growing unbearable," he said. "No wonder the service is becoming what it is when such low creatures are let into it. No matter, I shall have them all at my feet yet. I'll confound the whole crew." He then proceeded to decorate himself with his best care and finish, determining, for that night at least, to produce an artistic work. The delicate "spiritual" toning of his face would be a new effect, and, under wax-light, who could tell what further result as yet undreamt of. By eleven the scaffolding was down, and the figure stood out perfectly finished. He was pleased.

As he looked in the glass, something about "a head of Ary Scheffer" occurred to him.

CHAPTER IX. MAJOR CARTER'S "LITTLE PARTY."

MAJOR CARTER'S rooms were of a very modest order. They were not very large, not very high, not very long, and not very broad. This was known to most people, but it was not so well known that he got them very cheap.

The little chambers, for they were not "lodgings," which was a mean description, were now blazing with light. There was to be a little music. They were gay and tasteful chambers, and were excellent in every point but room, and, though a sort of polite famine reigned, the major was unaccountably profuse in light. "Light your rooms, light your rooms," he used to say, in his pleasant way. Wax he considered the true basis of society. It supplied furniture, gilding, jewels, meat, drink, and clothes—that is, supper, champagne, and dress.

The "rooms" could be seen afar off blazing like the lantern of a lighthouse, and inside the illumination produced astonishing marvels. They spread out into spacious apartments. The furniture became glorified. Guests found their old tulle turned for them cheaply into new, and possibly their older cheeks brightened artificially into young.

While Captain Fermor dressed, there was a scene of another kind going on not very far away from him, in the house of the Mannels. Mr. Hanbury had been there that evening, but had only seen the eldest Miss Manuel. Her sister was lying down with a headache. Latterly his boisterous tone had been quite tempered down. He had come in very often, and had sat in a moody unsettled way, talkative and silent by spasms. Of this night he had abruptly asked were they *sure* they were going to Mr. Carter's, quite sure? He was told they were. Then, in the disappointed way, he answered that he would go too, as it would be most likely the last party he would be at there. He was tired of the place and of its monotony, and had made up his mind to go in a day or two. "I am a sort of wandering man," he said, "and half an hour gets me ready for the road. The horses Bates will look after." He amplified this text a good deal, then returned to his inquiry if they were sure—all of them—to be *there* that night? "I should like to go to Australia," he said. "That would be the place for me. The woods and prairies, hunting and fishing. I believe those are the only things I can understand. As for the world and society, I begin to find I am a mere child. I mistake things, the commonest things. I have too plain and matter-of-fact a mind for the world. I believe in my senses, and take words and speeches to be what they mean; and so," added John Hanbury, with a rueful smile, "it is better that I should be off to the backwoods and sheep-walks, unless," he added, "something turns up to stop me."

An hour later, Pauline Manuel was with her sister as she dressed. It was nearly eleven

o'clock, and they were late. It was a curious mixture of vehement expostulation and adornment. The younger girl, with her hair down on her shoulders, was excited, defiant, and timorous by turns. Her sister had influence with her, and on this night spoke warmly and almost passionately. She walked up and down, vehemently pleading for the cause she had at heart, with quick gestures and kindling eye. She told her she was a child, a baby, that should have its toys, its rattles, and drums. She told her that it was only a guilty, wicked nature, that would make a plaything of a brave and honest man's heart. *She* could have no heart herself; a point of view that rather scared the gentler girl, whose cheeks kindled in a sort of piteous protest at what she said was a "cruel tyranny." But at half-past eleven, when the elder girl came down to the drawing-room, a sort of empress in her dress, she spoke softly to her brother with a sort of satisfaction, a communication, too, that was received with moody satisfaction, as though it was likely that all would be well before the night was over. "The other," said the brother, "will not be well enough to go out at night."

It looked a pretty little party. Careful selection had been made, and but few had been allowed to pass the wicket. "I might have had the whole of our little city," was a speech the host made many times that night, in many quarters, and to many persons. "Indeed, you cannot conceive the pressure that was put on me to get to our poor little party. It is astonishing the lengths people will go. But we made up our minds, Mrs. Carter and myself, &c." He was part of the lighting himself, and his clear, clean face flashed out in all quarters of the room at unexpected moments during the whole night. There was Mrs. Carter also present, so quiet, so silent, so timorous, so swept along in the breezes of her husband's conversation, that the company regarded her no more than they did a cheap china figure which was on the chimney-piece. She was timid and mouse-like in voice and manner, and when sometimes she would glide out nervously over the carpet to perform some duties of reception, her husband, who seemed to dislike such exhibition, would be down upon her in a gust, and swallow her up in a tempest of words.

Fermor arrived very late, and in a sort of agitation. He felt there was something for him to go through that night, though he did not know what. Looking in a little glass below, where his hat was taken, he thought his face had all the delicacy of Sévres. The stairs were narrow, and the house offended with the strong fresh savour of new paint and varnish. He was relieved when he saw the blaze of light in the little rooms, and then his name was sang according to the due ritual, and Major Carter at the other end of the room "going about" came down on him affectionately. It was so good of him to look in on a little thing of this kind, to come in this sort of way. He was ashamed to put people in a little cabin of this kind. "I know you are laughing at me, Cap-

tain Fermor," continued the major. "You have your pencil out, and jotting down notes for a friend, or two—O, you see, I have heard. Do let me off this time."

Fermor smiled.

"Introduce you to anybody?" said the major, doubtfully; then answering himself, after consulting Fermor's face, "No, no! scarcely. You are more at home in this place than I am."

"Thanks, thanks," said Fermor, moving away. "I think I see a few that I know. I shall get on very well. Thanks."

The major had again hoisted his mainsail and was away, making the opposite corner. Fermor saw there was a border of tulle round the room, with an inner ring of black cloth, and men scattered irregularly, like sentries.

Close beside him was a sort of little gipsy encampment, the gipsies of which (though they did not wear red cloaks, and had no fire or kettle) were two pretty girls, whom Fermor knew to be Miss Campbells, Jessie and Fanny. They were about the same height, only one seemed to have a sort of an Arabian, or flashing racer air; the other was more after the pattern of a quiet, demure Shetland pony, yet both, under these disguises, had equal spirit. They were well known to the gentlemen of the army, who, when they had to leave, took away with them the tradition of the "Campbell girls," handed it on to other "fellows" (like a fiery cross), who in their turn passed it forward to other "fellows" again, whom luck or fortune brought back to that quarter. Thus, where there was a barrack or a mess-table, their names were familiar. They were social vivandières, and they had little red books published once a month by authority of the War-office, which they read far more devoutly than they did other pious books. Yet ill-natured voices were heard to whisper the low, vulgar description, "garrison hacks!" Fermor had often studied, and sarcastically described, their devotion to the service. They knew every soldier there—dealt with them with an air of proprietorship—gave them orders. Wherever there was a "Campbell girl," there was a picket of military, with the oddest names, posted about them. There was Mr. Tite, and Mr. Crowe, and Mr. Cadby, Captain Lookit, and Major Peachum. If there were a party in a house, and a sheltered nook on the stairs of that house, the curious explorer would awkwardly stumble on a pair concealed behind a curtain. If any one gave an *al fresco* party, and there was a retired walk or arbour associated with that *al fresco* party, a soldier and a "Campbell girl" were certain to be made out as figures in that rustic passage. These are, indeed, only Captain Fermor's observations, who made them a study as he would natural history, and was often sarcastic on it. As he entered, they were camped to the left, with Sturt, Peachum, Lookit, and others, round the camp kettle. There was an air of proprietorship about the girls, with an air, too, of separation from the rest of the society, which was always part of the Campbell tactics. The

mor, looking round the whole company, at one end saw two bright faces, rich in fulness and colour, which were as effective as a good many of Major Carter's lights. He saw their brother standing up beside them, looking towards him sourly and distrustfully, and on the other side was bending down a figure whom his instinct told him was Hanbury. When the latter lifted himself from his bent position, and the light from some of Major Carter's wax-lights fell upon his face, Fermor saw that it was radiant and blazing, what, in a moment of pique, he would have called "an oafish good humour" and happiness. Some of this light was reflected on to the two girls' faces.

Fermor, feeling another of those sharp pangs which he had experienced before, turned suddenly aside with his best air of indifference, and broke into the little gipsy encampment beside him. He was scarcely of the pattern for *that* company—of the noisy, roystering irregularities in which they delighted. He had always treated them with a coldness that was almost insolence, and had passed them with a look of half astonishment, half contempt. But though thus long outraged, they seemed to look wistfully at him, and there are those who are grateful for even a crumb of civility. His irruption was now a surprise, and welcomed with delight. He threw the party of boys into disorder, who could scarce cope with a craft of this metal. The Arabian tossed her head proudly, and was almost obsequious to him. The second Miss Manuel, looking over of a sudden, saw the Christian knight ensnared by those Moabitish women, and started. Hanbury, whose face was like a sun-beam, and who found himself that night drifting deliciously down the river, suddenly found her grow distract.

Presently there was to be music. The eldest Miss Manuel was taken over to a tiny cottage piano, led by Major Carter, who, leaning on it as it were on a balcony, and looking in her face, talked critically and with fluency of its beauties and secret powers. "I dare say," he said, "you would not guess who chose this for me. I can do nothing in this way myself—at least nothing *you* would care to listen to. Yet old Lord Dogberry always said I was made for something better than merely strumming tunes."

Miss Manuel let her fingers amble very lightly down over the keys, and up again, as it might be over a smooth green sward. She smiled. The sound was woody and dull. She was happy that night, and glanced over at her sister, where all was going so well.

"You don't think much of our piano," he said. "No wonder! You should have had an *Erard*, the most splendid that could be got for money. Yet I assure you Miss Van Tromp, Lady Charlotte's daughter, you know, chose it herself. I assure you she said—" continued he, half turning round and addressing a little audience that had gathered—"she said there was a peculiar sustained *ring* in the middle notes which she had never met with in any

other instrument. One might be choosing pianos for years without meeting such a thing. Quite an accident."

Miss Manuel, out of a sort of curiosity, began to sound this middle department in many keys. It did seem wonderful how that dull percussion of wood upon wood could have so struck Lady Charlotte's daughter; but such is the force of prestige and musical authority, that heads were presently seen bent a little on one side, at a slight angle, and it was thought that indications of this rare and peculiar timbre were to be detected.

Major Carter listened with pleasure, looking round from one to the other. "As you may imagine," he said, "I only thought myself too lucky, and *snapped* it up at once. And there you see what it is."

This is a sample of that shining varnish, a bottle of which Major Carter always carried in his conversational pocket. With this he lubricated every article of his personal property, and made them dazzle the eyes of the public. It was an artful, but at the same time a cheap process. As she broke into her symphony, which had a sort of wild awkwardness, and a lawless measure, she thought she would do her best, and sang a sort of Spanish song, full of a strange defiance and picturesqueness, and in which the clinking sounds of the castanets seemed to be heard, and short scarlet petticoats to flash. It was sung with extraordinary spirit, and almost recklessness.

This sort of entertainment scarcely fell within the round of amusements the Campbells affected. Music was profitable for them in a certain sense: finding it like the music in a melodrama, effective for "talking through." Fermor entertained them with an acted hilarity and gaiety, but he noted warily, piteous restless glances stolen over in his direction, and was pleased with his own skill. Presently the brother passed close by, and rather fretted him by a satisfied supercilious air, as who should say, all danger is past and we are now in port. And finally Miss Manuel, having vocally danced her Bolero, and being led past in a sort of progress by Major Carter, who was expatiating airily and with lively gesture on her as they walked, she looked so bright and "lustrous," and gave Fermor such a warm cordial happy greeting, that his brow became suddenly overcast, and his manner absent; and having accepted a lively sally of Miss Jessie Campbell with an extraordinary assumed relish but a few moments before, he now received the next with his coldest stare, and quite discomposed her. Presently, he saw some of the youths of the regiment, whose angry passions he had inflamed by his sudden interference, and who had gradually withdrawn, growing vindictively, telling new ladies to whom they had attached themselves all about the mess-table scene. And Captain Thersites, passing quite close, and lounging past, called out with an unmistakable sneer, "Poor, poor Fermor!"

Miss Jessie Campbell, who illustrated the

this texture of her small-talk with a border of giggles, that seemed almost hysterical, found herself, to her surprise, left on the broken rafter of an incomplete sentence. Fermor had strode away, clearly not thinking of her, or of what she was saying, and was whispering to Major Carter at the other end of the room; who, delighted and flattered, received the communication with a smile of surprise. "Ah, you think so! What an idea! I am really under obligations to you. The very thing, just as we were beginning to flag a little."

"Quite easy," said Fermor, explaining his theory with great fluency and a professional air; "move away these things—get those dowagers into the corners—the young ladies to play by turns—less formal, you see; and we can make a beginning, say—with—with," added Fermor, looking round the room—"ah, Miss Manuel!"

"To be sure, so we can," said Major Carter, in a tumult of delight.

"And you can get Mr. Hanbury, and some of those strong men," continued Fermor, "to clear the room—a sort of fatigue party."

Miss Manuel was delighted—pleased to do anything useful on that night. And Hanbury called over, was presently warehousing all the furniture of the room in corners, stowing away heavy weights with enthusiasm, like a porter at play. At every party there are honest creatures like this, who revel in being made social hodmen. The "boys" assisted with juvenile delight, and there were marvels done in the way of wheeling off on castors, and hemming up one of the Miss Campbells (engrossed with Mr. Lockit) behind an ottoman. Mr. Lockit had helped her back off the broken plank of a sentence where Fermor had left her, and they both agreed that a more vain, conceited, brusque creature never was, with "nothing in him."

When Hanbury, boisterous with his exertions, looked round for general approbation, he saw Fermor on the chair he had quitted for a few seconds only, and closeted with Miss Violet Mannel. At that distance, too, he could even see that Fermor was speaking very fast and earnestly, and that she was listening with an absorbed devotion. Was this a crafty artifice on the side of Fermor? It must be said, such were not his usual weapons.

Hanbury plunged over in a blunt hurried way. "They are going to have a quadrille," he said, "and—and I am come for you—that is, if you will dance."

Fermor looked up at him with his most good-natured smile. "You have been doing wonders," he said; "we have been looking at you. Properly, Miss Violet is engaged to me, but I *think*," he said, "we shan't dance at all. What do you say? Now, *you* should make yourself useful, and ask some of those people yonder."

He looked at her for an answer, but she gave none. "Are you engaged?" he said.

"Good gracious," said Fermor, "I have told you. Why——" and he whispered something to her, with a smile and a look of intelligence. Hanbury did not mind the first, but when he

saw the second, he turned round and walked away. Miss Manuel, who had been playing scraps and patches of music very pleasantly, had seen part of this little episode, and flew across to speak to her sister. Between sisters these *expressés* are common, and she whispered a few words; but they were vehement words, full of concentrated meaning. "So you are really to be our orchestra," came to her ear in the voice of Major Carter. "I don't know what to say to you, it is so kind." And he made a coasting voyage round the room, saying to every one, "You see who I have got for orchestra." "Miss Manuel is good-natured enough to touch my little piano."

Fermor and his companion were the only two of the younger human family not dancing. Every one standing up in the little hollow square looked round at them as at something conspicuous or marked. The orchestra must have thus been busy herself, for she had a sort of reputation for this kind of playing, and her fingers used to perform whole ballets on the keys; but now it wanted spirit! and she was glancing uneasily over the top of the little cottage piano.

No wonder. For all this time Fermor's words were pouring out very fast. Violet seemed to be feasting on them as on some delicious fruit. There was a tender air about her that night, her eyes had a soft shy look, and she had a half helpless, half tender and trusting manner, which to Fermor was fascinating.

"If you would only confide in me, my advice has been found useful sometimes, I should give you the best I am capable of. Or perhaps—and you won't be angry—I know the story, or can guess it."

A softness, too, had come upon Fermor's voice, and covered it like a delicate bloom. The lustrous eyes seemed to lift themselves to meet his, not so much languidly as reverently.

"There is pressure, persuasion, what may be called family intimidation, put upon you," he went on, a little excitedly. "From the best motives, no doubt. I know what that sort of thing means. If we put our home lives side by side there would be a wonderful likeness. These things repeat themselves. But I can use a firm resistance. We men can fight, but you are helpless—that is, if you will not let me help you."

"Oh," said she, softly, "it is so good of you. But I cannot ask you. I ought not to speak of these things, but some way I feel——"

"You feel," said Fermor, with his "lighter scornful manner," as she would call it, "that I am not exactly the person—quite so. You take what I say for mere fashionable words, of course. Exactly. Why not choose that rough honest creature yonder, who is glaring at us so savagely?"

Honest John was, indeed, looking back from his ranks in the quadrille in sorest distress, and then dancing desperately.

What Fermor intended when he sat down he could not well tell himself. If any one had said

to him, "You are going to ride the rough stormy waves of a great ocean, mind, I warn you," he would have smiled, and have returned with his usual triumphal air of victory. In the same way, if any one had said to him lightly, "You are going to amuse yourself with a poor girl, and make a plaything of her," he would have scouted the idea, and, by way of compensation, have been gracefully considerate to her the whole night long. The truth was, he did not know what he wanted, or what he intended. He only felt a void of longing for a dramatic scene, and he felt himself gradually drawn on and on, to the stage.

"Well," said Fermor, "may I go on?" He waited a moment. "The wretched gossips of this wretched place have the whole story too. They say it is a very suitable thing; riches, honesty, the good 'bluffness' of the novels, and a warm attachment."

"Never, never," said she, not lifting her eyes. "They wish me, they are pressing, and I am too weak to resist. But the thought makes me wretched."

Never did Fermor enjoy a dramatic situation so much.

"Why," said he, with pleasant astonishment, "how you surprise me. I thought it was an old attachment!"

"It was, it was, until——" She stopped.

"Until what?"

She was colouring and flushing, and dislocating her fan. "Oh," she went on, "I don't know what to do. I have no friend. I am alone in that house. They are all against me, except mamma. And they say, and it is true, that it would be so dishonourable, he is so good and generous and faithful. And, and——" she hesitated, "I am to decide to-night, for he is to go away to-morrow for ever, and——"

She was so beautiful in her confusion, so delicate, so brilliant, with cheeks so lit up from within, that Fermor, in a warm infatuation, lost in a second his cold and steady command of himself. The reins slackened in his hand, and he was carried away by the whirl of dramatic effect. Even in a flash of a second he had a glimpse of Captain Thersites opposite, motioning him out with his eyes, to the lady he was dancing with; to whom he stooped and whispered.

A SECOND SWARM OF BEES.*

It is a peculiarity of bees that they will suffer some men to handle them with impunity. Wildman was a man who seems to have had an unusual attraction for them, or command over them, as he termed it, though it is not easy to comprehend how a man could have command over four thousand or five thousand insects. On one occasion he paid a visit to Dr. Templeton, the then Secretary of the Society for the En-

couragement of Arts, to prove to him how completely bees submitted to his influence. He was brought through the city in a sedan-chair, and, it is to be presumed, into the doctor's room, for when he presented himself his head and face were covered with bees, and a huge cluster of them hung down like a beard from his chin. Notwithstanding this novel appendage, he conversed with the ladies and gentlemen who were present for a considerable time without disturbing the insects, and finally dismissed them to their hive without anybody being stung. The fame of his performances having reached Lord Spencer, he invited him to Wimbledon to meet a large party of his friends. The countess had provided three stocks for the occasion. He first took one of the hives and emptied the living occupants into his hat to show that it was not necessary to destroy the bees in order to deprive them of their honey. He next presented himself with a colony hanging about his head and from his chin, and then stepping out of a window on to the lawn, where he had directed a table covered with a clean cloth to be placed, he put them back into the hive. He then made them come out again and swarm about in the air, after which he caused them to settle on the table, and from thence he took them up by handfuls, and poured them out of his hand as if they had no more feeling than pebbles, and finally concluded this portion of his entertainment by causing them to re-enter their hive. His lordship was too unwell to be present at these experiments, so, later in the afternoon, he was taken into his lordship's room with all three of the stocks hanging about him at one time, one on his head, one on his breast, and the other on his arm, from which places he afterwards transferred them to his head and face, so that he was quite blinded, and was led in this condition to the lawn in front of his lordship's window. He next requested that a horse might be brought round, which was done, the horse having been first well clothed to guard against accidents. First taking the bees out of his eyes that he might see what he was about, he mounted the horse with the bees hanging about him, and rode backwards and forwards repeatedly, until the company had seen enough of his performance, when he dismounted and placed the bees on the table, from whence he dismissed them to their respective hives. It is worthy of remark, that though there were a great many persons present on this, as on the previous occasion, yet nobody was stung.

The means by which Wildman exercised this unusual influence over bees was by securing the queen, which long experience enabled him to identify without difficulty among a host of others, and placing her on any part of his body on which he wished the swarm to settle. The manner in which he performed with bees was thought by many persons to savour of sorcery, and a good deal of excitement was occasioned by his performances. The dread which people generally have of bees made them disbelieve the

* See "Bees," page 188 of the present volume.

reports of his handling them with such impunity, and the same incredulity was expressed of the statement made in the *Memoires* of the Duc de Bru, Director of the French Company of Senegal, who there relates the case of a man in Senegal, who was known as the bee-master in consequence of his doing precisely the same things with them as Wildman. The latter, however, was more fortunate than he, probably, for the Society of Arts, in consideration of his services in promoting the culture of bees, made him a present of one hundred guineas. It would not be advisable for every man who may venture on keeping bees to handle them in this way. A Mr. Morant, living at Grange-lane, Southwark, at a time when Southwark had not so many houses in it as it has now, was stung to death in his garden by his own bees. These insects also have a very keen smell, and there are some men for whom they have a special dislike, and whom they will always sting if they approach their hives. This belief is carried to a fanciful extent by some bee-keepers; they say that any person approaching the hive whose person or dress is perfumed is certain to be stung, for the bees hold all odours in abhorrence. If this were true, one might well ask how they manage to endure the smell of the flowers from which they gather the materials of which they make their honey. It is either Livy or Pliny who goes further than this, and avers that it is on moral grounds the bee forms his estimate of mankind; that they object to men whose actions are impure generally, and have an especial antipathy to thieves. It is in reality impossible to explain why they should favour one individual more than another, but they certainly do so; it is related of a Duchess of Rutland that a swarm followed her all the way from the country to a house in Berkeley-square, where they were hived.

Accident has sometimes led to what Wildman did with design. A woman named Bennet, living near Birmingham, was beating a frying-pan with a key to keep the swarm from going away, when they all at once settled upon her head, neck, and shoulders. Luckily for her she was a woman of nerve, and, instead of making efforts to brush them off, which would have probably caused her to be stung to death, she kept quiet, notwithstanding an occasional sting from bees which had crawled underneath her clothes, and which were probably irritated from being unable to get out. When the evening came, they were hived in the usual way. It is not advisable to get into the way of bees when they are swarming, for at such times they are frequently very irritable. A swarm of them hovered about a fine mastiff who was chained to a kennel, and stung him so severely that he died. It would seem hardly possible for them to sting him through his coat, but in his anger he must have snapped at them, and so gave them an opportunity of entering his mouth, for, after his death, many were found in his mouth and throat.

Of the rapidity with which bees work even under unfavourable circumstances, we have a very precise account related by Swammerdam. He hived a swarm on the 25th of July, and on the 31st of the same month he killed them all. The weather had been very bad in the interval, and he did not therefore expect to find they had done much. He first counted the number of bees, and found there were five thousand six hundred and sixty-nine, all of which were workers, with the exception of the queen and thirty-three males. They had built in this short time three thousand three hundred and ninety-two complete cells for the workers, forty-five of which contained eggs, and one hundred and fifty newly-hatched worms; sixty-two cells were filled with bee-bread, and two hundred and thirty-six had contained honey, which, however, had been eaten.

The queens, inveterate as they are against each other, will not sting each other simultaneously. Two placed face to face, rushed together with the greatest fury, but so dexterous were they, and so well matched, that neither had the advantage, both being in a position to give the death-blow. No sooner, however, did their bellies come in contact, than, instead of thrusting their stings into each other, they released their grip with the greatest precipitation, and retreated as fast as they could in opposite directions, as though the fear of death was as strong in them as in a millionaire. Apparently their impulse was to escape, and not to renew the conflict, but a number of workers collected round each, seized them by their legs, and compelled them to remain in the space which had been vacated for the combat. The queens looked at each other for a short space, and then made a second rush, but they were equally wary, and their grip was the same as on the first occasion, and they again separated with the same manifestation of horror, endeavouring to get as far apart as possible, but were again checked by the bees who watched the fight. Brought in presence once more, one of them suddenly changed her mode of attack, and succeeded in seizing her antagonist by the wing, and bending her body so as to bring her extremity underneath her, she plunged her sting into her belly, and stretched her victim dead. The same experiment was repeated with a fertile and a virgin queen. The latter darted at the other with the fiercest determination, and succeeded in mounting on her back, but her efforts to sting while in this position were ineffectual, from the scales on her opponent's sides preventing the weapon from penetrating. They then drew apart a short distance, and in the next charge it was the matron who got into this position, but, being equally unable to profit by it, she dismounted and moved away. A longer pause ensued before they renewed the attack a third time, the other bees wedging them in and waiting with the most perfect calmness for the termination of the encounter, to all appearance indifferent whether their own queen or the interloper was the victor, but quite determined that one of them should

lose her life in the battle. In the third and last charge the fertile queen managed to seize her antagonist by the side, and in an instant her sting was plunged into her belly, and the death of her opponent was instantaneous. The next experiment tried was the introduction of a fertile queen into a hive. The bees had no sooner caught sight of the stranger than several of them surrounded her and held her fast; they did not attempt to sting her or to hurt her in any way, their only object appeared to be to prevent her from getting away. Presently the queen of the hive, who appeared to have been informed of the arrival of a stranger within her dominions, made her appearance, attended by a large body of her subjects. On seeing her, the bees who surrounded the stranger moved away and left a clear space for the fight. In this case, also, the two queens seized each other in such a way that both were in a position to give the death-stroke, but either because, as some think, they were so deeply impressed with the disastrous consequence to the colony should it be left without a ruler, or, as seems to me more natural to suppose, from an instinctive dread of the sting in their own case, they parted with every indication of horror, and moved away in opposite directions. Both seemed desirous of discontinuing the conflict, but the workers held them by the legs whenever they attempted to force a way through them, and waited with patient watchfulness for the renewal of the fight, which was only ended when one of the combatants was killed.

In these experiments, which were repeated many times, it might be inferred from the conduct of the workers that they could not distinguish between their own queen and the stranger queen, and that it was from mere instinct that they compelled them to fight until only one queen was left in the hive, or otherwise they would put the intruder to death, which it certainly would be very easy for them to do. But there is no doubt they do know their own queen; they never interfere with her movements, but a strange queen introduced into the hive was invariably seized and kept a prisoner, and so closely enveloped by her jailers that she was sometimes suffocated from the length of time they kept her in that position; but in no case did this appear to be other than the effect of accident, for they never ill used or stung her. They never, however, released the stranger unless their own queen manifested a desire to attack her, in which case they withdrew from her with the greatest alacrity, as though they were really anxious to see the fight.

Experiments were tried by Huber to ascertain how a hive of bees would behave towards a stranger queen after they had lost their own. He removed the native queen, and after a few hours he introduced a strange queen into the hive. The bees which mount guard at the entrance of the hive immediately seized her and made her a prisoner, precisely as they would have done if their queen had still been among

them. They did this each time the experiment was repeated. An interval of sixteen hours was suffered to elapse from the time they discovered the loss of their queen, and then a stranger queen was introduced into the hive. She was treated precisely as the others had been, as were also her successors in similar experiments, but in some instances, where they survived the pressure, want of air, and hunger for several hours, they were allowed to assume the position of queen of the hive. Twenty-four hours were then suffered to elapse after their queen had been taken away, before a foreign queen was put into the hive, and instead of being made a prisoner she was welcomed with every sign of joy, and at once accepted as their queen; evidently they had arrived at the conclusion, that, from the length of time that had elapsed, there was no chance of their own queen coming back. It must have been from reasoning in this way, because it was always the case, that if twenty-four hours had passed since she disappeared, the new queen was received with respect and obedience. A very striking instance of this is related. The lawful queen was removed at a time when she was busily engaged in laying eggs. After a time the news spread through the hive, and the usual consternation prevailed. They were left in this condition a great many hours, their agitation being the greater that no new queen was ready for release from her cell; in fact, none of the royal cells had been built. They therefore proceeded to enlarge some of the cells containing the eggs of workers in the manner described in a previous article. A stranger queen was then introduced, and directly she entered the hive, those who guarded the entrance, instead of making her a prisoner, received her with the greatest respect and satisfaction; they approached her and touched her with their antennæ, and gave her food. The news began to circulate through the hive that a new monarch had arrived, and the bees kept pouring in, all of which drew near in succession, and performed the same ceremony. She had been placed in the hive on one side of the comb, which hung down vertically like a curtain, and separated her from the workers on the other side. Presently she moved round to that side, and no sooner had she made her appearance there than the bees at once acknowledged her as their queen; they abandoned their occupations, approached her, and touched her with their antennæ, and caressed her with their fore legs, each after it had performed the ceremony walking away again to its work, or joining the crowd of spectators who accompanied her in her progress until she had visited every part of the community. A very curious circumstance, and one which looks like the result of reasoning, in fact must have been the result of reasoning, was this: that the workers who had continued the operation of enlarging the cells for the purpose of converting workers into royal brood, before they were aware of her presence in the hive, had no sooner recognised the new queen

than they perceived it was not necessary to continue their labour, and therefore desisted at once.

As regards the size of the cells, Huber relates some experiments made by him which demonstrate that it is not the size alone which determines the size of the occupant; the cell must be large enough to admit of the development, but the food it is supplied with plays an important part. The queen distinguishes between the dimensions of the different cells, and will not deposit the eggs from which workers are to be hatched in the large cells intended for the drones, but will rather prefer to waste them. A piece of comb containing only large cells was placed in a hive in the position of a piece which had contained workers' cells. The queen was most desirous of laying her eggs, was dropping them all about the hive, but would not enter these cells. These large cells were then removed, and a piece of comb substituted containing workers' brood. As the comb could not be used in this condition, the workers, sympathising with their queen, at once proceeded to clear out the brood and clean the cells for her use. The queen evidently recognised the unsuitableness of the cells which were built for male bees for the reception of the eggs of workers; and what is, perhaps, still more strange, the bees themselves appear to be able to distinguish a difference between the eggs of drones and those from which workers are to be hatched, for when a number of the latter were placed by a bee-master in the large cells intended as a repository for the former, the bees which closed the cells made the surface flat instead of oval, as usual, showing that they were conscious that less room would be sufficient. In connexion with the laying of eggs, a striking proof was given of the interest which the ordinary bees take in the proper performance of the functions of their sovereign in this matter, in the case of a queen which was tied by means of a piece of silk in such a position that she could not reach the more distant cells; she was therefore obliged to drop them on the floor, from whence they were taken by her subjects and deposited by them in the cells provided for their reception.

Bees are perfectly willing to accept the home that is offered them, taking care to secure it against the influx of rain, but, if left to their own resources, it is manifest that they cannot have hives to occupy, and must therefore resort to their natural abode, and this is usually a hollow in a tree. To find a suitable hollow within a reasonable distance is sometimes a difficult matter, and it appears to be their practice (of course I am speaking now of countries where there are forests, in which they lead an unsophisticated existence) to send out scouts to search for a new dwelling-place when the old one is over-populated. When one has been discovered, the scout flies away and fetches other bees, and together they explore the hollow, carefully examining the bark, and especially the knots or projections, as if they were afraid that

these might in some way be prejudicial to the comfort of the interior. Having made up their minds on this point, they return to the hollow from whence they started, and guide the emigrants to their new home. They never make a mistake and lose their way, however distant their habitation may be, and this is a fact which is little less than extraordinary, and applies equally to the domesticated bee. They fly long distances in search of flowers, it may be to a heath a mile, or two miles, or even more distant, and, having loaded themselves, they mount in the air and take a direct line to the place from whence they set out; there is no hesitation, no zig-zags in their course, but a steady flight in a straight line. No matter how many hives there may be surrounding their own, they never go to one of these, but always directly to their own. By what marvellous instinct they are enabled to do this we cannot conjecture, and it is still more surprising that they should be able to do this in a forest abounding in trees. It is a pity that such intelligent insects are not always suffered to pursue their flight unmolested, but they are exposed to risks like every other living creature; sometimes it is a bird which drops upon them, at other times it is a gust of wind which, heavily laden as they are when they are on their way home, dashes them to the ground and kills or maims them. The load they carry is surprising for such little creatures, especially when we remember how far they frequently have to go to procure it, and their flanks must be exceedingly strong or they would never be able to bear it. It was, no doubt, from imperfect observation of the nature of the substance they carry on their thighs which induced Pliny to say that they were accustomed to prevent themselves from being blown away in a high wind by carrying a small bit of stone between their legs.

Bees, as a rule, are very pugnacious when there are many of them together; it appears, however, that when they are alone they are very peaceful, and bear spoliation without resistance. A solitary bee has been seen to submit to be plundered of the store it had deposited on its thighs as many as three times in succession without attacking the robber, when it was at a distance from home; but if attacked when it is near its hive, it becomes quite another matter; then other members of the community fly to its assistance, and as members of the colony to which the would-be robber belongs sometimes hasten to help him in his need, a general battle ensues, in which loss of life to several of the individuals concerned is the inevitable result. It has happened that a more systematic attempt has been made to plunder on a more extensive scale. A hive, the inhabitants of which are driven to desperation by hunger, having selected a hive which they know to contain honey, force their way in like an army of Taepings, and slaughter the inhabitants without mercy. If the inhabitants prove to be too strong for the invaders, they are expelled, and no quarter is given; all who are caught before they can make

their way out of the hive, pay for their intrusion with their lives, as indeed is only just. A hive that has been thus attacked, even when it makes a successful resistance, is subject to peculiar dangers; for if any of the inhabitants of a neighbouring hive happen to have joined the invaders, and tasted the sweets of spoil, they are likely to incite their brethren to make an attack in their turn, and another slaughter takes place, and if they are too strong for the community, every one of the inmates is killed, and the contents of the hive devoured, the only chance of the rightful owners getting a portion being apparently by joining the marauders. It is only, however, in the confusion that they could do this; for numerous as are the inhabitants of a hive, they know each other. An instance is recorded of a weak swarm attempting to mingle with one more numerous, but they were at once recognised as strangers, and furiously attacked and driven off, a second attempt proving as unsuccessful as the first. Once when a weak swarm succeeded in making their way into the hive along with the rest, they were discovered, and in spite of an obstinate resistance, in which a large number were killed, they were quickly driven out. Another instance is related of two swarms being hived together, which went on building without the two queens being aware of each other's presence. The subjects worked amicably together in building their cells without interfering with their respective monarchs, but, when these latter met, the usual fight ensued until one was killed, when the amalgamation of the two communities under one head became complete.

Some cruel experiments have been made with bees, as with most other living things which man can get into his power. A queen was deprived of her wings, and thus rendered unable to quit the hive; nevertheless, she continued to deposit her eggs as before, in spite of the cruel operation to which she had been subjected. Another was deprived of her antennæ, and the consequence of this was that she lost the power of directing her trunk directly at her food, but had to grope about for it, very much as a man would have to do if he were deprived of his eyesight. The workers were kind and attentive to her, but she seemed insensible to their caresses, and at times quite delirious. Another queen, similarly mutilated, was introduced into the hive, but she took no notice of her, and the workers, too, appeared to pity the stranger's condition, as they did that of their own queen, and suffered her to wander about wherever she pleased, both queens dropping their eggs at random, as if they had lost the faculty of distinguishing the cells, or were indifferent in the miserable condition to which they had been reduced, what became of them. That the workers had been influenced by pity in leaving the stranger unmolested, may be inferred from the fact that on a perfect queen being introduced into the same hive, she was at once seized and made a prisoner. Eventually their own queen wandered out of the hive without any of her

subjects following her or seeming to care what became of her, and so the poor queen crawled away and died in solitude.

THE PERRAN SANDS.

HAST thou ever, in a travel
Through the Cornish lands,
Heard the great Atlantic roaring,
On the firm wide tawny flooring
Of the Perran Sands?

'Cross a heath of sterile grandeur,
Underlaid with ore,
Hard by clank of mighty delving,
Pass ye down a roadway shelving
Slowly to the shore.

Down and down, a joyfal terror
Burdening the mind,
As the booming and the clangour
Of the breakers' lofty anger
Cometh on the wind.

Down with quickening pulses,
Till ye reach a strand,
Where each day and night defiant
Waves advance to hold a giant
Tourney on the land.

Sea-rent gully, where the billows
Come in great unrest;
Fugitives all white and reeking,
Flying from some vengeful sea-king
Striding from the West.

Level broadway, ever ermined
By the ocean verge;
Girt by sand-hills, swelling, shoaling
Down to imitate the rolling
Of the lordly surge.

Either side, dark solemn headlands
Sentinel the way,
Calmly looking on the curling
Summits of the breakers, hurling
Javelins of spray.

Nine large flocks of troubled water
Turbulently come;
From the bosom of his mother,
Each one leaping on his brother,
Scatters lusty foam.

In the sky a wondrous silence,
Cloud-surf mute and weird;
In the distance, still uplifting,
Ghostly fountains vanish, drifting
Like a Druid's beard.

Spreading out a cloth of silver,
Moan the broken waves;
Sheet of phosphorescent foaming,
Sweeping up to break the gloaming
Stillness of the caves.

Deep-mouthed wounds that, brine-tormented,
Gape from Titan sides;
Gashes in the rock supernal,
Opened by the great diurnal
Tunnelling of tides.

In the sea road, two retainers,
Standing out alone,
Mock the tempest-vexed Atlantic
Coming to be driven frantic
By eternal stone.

One a giant, and the other
Reared in lesser form,
Two broad mammoth-chested sages,
That have stood from primal ages,
To defy the storm.

Fronting it with gaunt and gnarled
Ribs of ruddy brown;
Sphinxes builded in the ocean,
On its everlasting motion
Looking sternly down.

QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER LII. STILL IN LUCK'S WAY.

LILY scarcely knew what to make of the new humour of her tyrant. The woman's avowal that she was her mother, and her claim upon her for a daughter's obedience, came upon the poor girl so suddenly and unexpectedly, that she was quite dazed and stupefied by the vague conflicting thoughts which chased each other through her brain, leaving no fixed or definite impression behind. Why had she so long forbidden Lily to regard her as her mother—dared her to call her by that name? Why did she make the avowal now, and claim, on the score of filial duty, that obedience which she had hitherto enforced by the terror of dreadful words and savage threats? What did she mean by speaking so savagely, and with so much significant emphasis, of Lily as her "legacy"? And then those terrible words about her father! As Lily sat in her mother's dressing-room at the circus, trying to beguile the time with some purposeless piece of embroidery, these distracting thoughts crowded upon her palpitating brain, and filled her trembling soul with a nameless terror.

She had had an impulse once or twice during the afternoon to throw herself into her mother's arms, and ask to be allowed to love her; but each time when she was on the point of doing so, she was repelled by a cold look or a harsh word. Poor Lily's lonely heart so yearned for something to love, so longed for some one to return the affection which welled over and ran to waste in her own desolate breast, that she could have loved even this cold, remorseless woman. Many and many a time when she was Quite Alone, in her little bed at the Pension Marcassin, she had tried to realise to herself what it was to have a papa and a mamma. The other girls talked about their papas and mammas, and bragged about them: how rich their papas were, how beautiful their mammas were, what treats their papas and mammas gave them when they went home for the holidays.

But Lily had no papa; none, at least, whom she knew; no mamma, except the harsh cruel woman who had brought her there, and left her among strangers, without a kiss or a kind word. And she was at times even doubtful about this woman, who showed none of a mother's feelings, nothing of a mother's love. Marygold had told her the

story of the babes in the wood, and of the cruel uncle who deserted them and left them to die in the pathless forest. Perhaps this woman, who chid her, and railed at her, and dragged her along so furiously, was a cruel aunt, who sought to lose her, and leave her to die in that strange city. And at such times, with such sad thoughts throbbing in her bewildered brain, the lonely child would hide her head under the bedclothes, and shed bitter tears. She had been often told that she was bad and obstinate and wicked. And though she did not feel herself a bad wicked girl, and tried to be good, she came to believe that what the woman and Madame Marcassin said of her must be true, and that it was because she was a bad wicked girl that she had no papa and mamma like the other girls. Many a night, long after her companions had gone to sleep, she lay awake, repeating her prayers over and over again, asking God to make her good and give her a kind papa and mamma; and, wearied out at last, she would fall into a pleasant slumber, and dream of the few kind faces that she had seen and known, and hear again the few voices that had spoken to her gently and kindly.

But now she had awakened from all her dreams and all her hopes. Her father, she had just been told, was a cheat, a scoundrel, and a beggar; and her mother was the unloving cold-hearted fury, who was at that moment performing for the amusement of a gaping crowd in the circus at Ranelagh. Poor Lily had but one refuge from the dark despair of the situation in which she found herself, and that was in thoughts of Edgar. They had met once again. He had seen her, and in that one moment, before she fainted, Lily saw that he recognised her. She fondly fancied that the sudden flush that came over his face betokened pleasure, and her yearning heart beat with a trembling joy at the thought. But sadness fell upon her again when she reflected that she was the daughter of a circus-rider, and he a rich high-born gentleman. Oh, if she were only a fine lady, and his equal!

Lily was startled from these distracting reflections by a gentle knock at the dressing-room door.

"Who is there?" she asked.

The door was opened gently, and a voice in the passage said, timidly, "It's only me, my dear."

It was the voice of the stars.

"Come in, Mr. Kafooze," said Lily; "there is no one here but me. I am quite alone."

"Yes, my dear," said the astrologer, "I knew that you were by yourself. I wouldn't have ventured if your ma—if Madame Ernestine—had been here. I don't think she likes me, my dear. I—I said something to her to-day, you know, when she came back for the whip. It's very unlucky to go back for things that way, my dear, and I couldn't help saying it. She's a very extraordinary woman, your ma. I—I really thought she would have horsewhipped me."

"Won't you come in, Mr. Kafooze, and sit

down a little?" said Lily, for the astrologer was still lingering in the passage.

"No, my dear, thank you," said Mr. Kafooze; "madame will be off in a few minutes, and I shouldn't like to fall in her way. I am afraid, my dear, she hasn't a very good temper. Some people can't help it; it's all owing to their stars, and folks can't help their stars, you know."

"Did you want to say anything particular to me, Mr. Kafooze?" Lily asked.

"Yes, my dear, just one word. You said you didn't know what star your mother was born under?"

"No, I don't know at all, Mr. Kafooze, or I should be very happy to tell you."

"I'm sure you would, my dear, I'm sure you would," said Mr. Kafooze. "It's a pity you don't know, though, for I might be able to tell you something about the future."

"Can you read the future, and tell what's going to happen, then?" Lily asked.

"Yes, my dear; I've been very correct on many occasions, I assure you. I make all the calculations for a prophetic almanack that sells by hundreds of thousands; but I never get the credit of it, nor the profit of it either. Poor broken-down folks like me never do. People laugh and say the things are put down at random, just what comes first; but they don't know anything about it. I can assure you, my dear, that when the almanack's in hand—and one is no sooner off than another comes on—I sit up night after night with the stars, and watch them, and read them until they go out in the dawn. And you should see the quires and quires of paper that I cover with figures. It costs me something for paper, I can tell you, and if it wasn't for the backs of Mr. M'Variety's letters and the old copy-books, I'm sure I don't know what I should do. Ah, it's hard work reading the stars, when you read them in earnest as I do. And there's no doing anything with them unless you study them well. I've got a list of my predictions fulfilled, if you would like to look at them. Here's what I predicted in my almanack for 1845: 'February, Mars is in Taurus, so that this month there will be wars and rumours of wars, and rebellions,' which you will see, my dear, by the Morning Advertiser of the 16th of February of the following year, was borne out to the letter. Here's the paragraph. It says: 'Yesterday the usually quiet little town of Croydon was the scene of great disturbance, owing to a quarrel among the navvies engaged on the railway. The navvies fought for some time with stones and sticks, and several of them were severely wounded. The tumult, however, was speedily put down by the police.' And here's another very remarkable one. For the 16th of March I said: 'The opposition of Saturn to Mars denotes the death of a great warrior.' And, sure enough, on the 16th of April of the following year, the Times announced the death of Lieutenant-Colonel Bol-

derby, of the Somersetshire militia. One of my predictions was fulfilled to the very day. The aspect of Neptune, my dear, enabled me to predict that there would be disaster at sea on the 18th of September, and on that very day, at one o'clock, a boy was drowned while out bathing at Southend. Ah, the stars never deceive you when you study them well. Do you know what star you were born under, my dear?"

"No, Mr. Kafooze," Lily said; "I have not the least idea."

"I should like to know very much," said Mr. Kafooze; "and also your ma's. I think your ma's star must have been Saturn. I don't say it with any disrespect to your ma, my dear, but Saturn is a bad star to be born under. The ancients said that he ate his children."

It fitted across Lily's mind that her ma's star was most probably Saturn.

"You can't tell me the date of your birth, can you?" Mr. Kafooze asked.

"I don't think I can, exactly, Mr. Kafooze," Lily answered. "I used to have a birthday, but it was long ago at school. I think it was in November—the last day of November."

"And how old are you now, my dear?"

"It may seem a strange thing to say, Mr. Kafooze," Lily answered, "but I don't exactly know. I—I think I am nineteen."

"Nineteen!" said Mr. Kafooze, "and the last day of November. Let me see, that will take us back to the year—But, bless me, there's your ma just come off, and I wouldn't have her catch me here for the world. Good-by, my dear, for the present. You'll see me again soon, when I may have something to tell you about the future."

And Mr. Kafooze closed the door, and shuffled away in the dark to get out of the countess's way. Poor soul! he was thoroughly in earnest about his stars, and really worked hard at that almanack which brought its proprietor and publisher many hundreds a year, but yielded old Kafooze only a few miserable pounds. Yet if it had yielded him nothing, he would have taken the same pains, for he loved his work, and believed in it. And this was how the poor old man never could earn more than his two pounds ten a week: he trusted in man, and believed in the stars.

Madame Ernestine came off from her exposition of the high school of horsemanship in great good humour. She was quite radiant with satisfaction. M'Variety had brought to her more good news.

"I am going to give you a benefit, countess, on the last night of the season."

The countess was not overjoyed at first, for she had had some experience of benefits. There were benefits and no benefits. M'Variety interpreted her dubious look at once, and hastened to assure her.

"Oh, don't be afraid; it's not that sort; the real thing, *bonâ fide*, fair share of the receipts, and no expenses. Come to my room after your performance, and I'll tell you all about it."

It was very necessary for Mr. M'Variety to

inform the countess that it was not "that sort." "That sort" was a benefit which M'Variety compelled all his people to take. It was written down in the bond: so much a week and a benefit. But why should compulsion ever be necessary in such a case? Who ever heard of a person refusing to take money when it is honestly offered to him, and he has nothing to do but hold out his hand for it? Well, the fact is, the benefits which Mr. M'Variety so liberally insisted upon all his people taking, were not benefits for them, but for himself. It was an understood thing that each member of the staff should allow his name to be advertised for a benefit, and that the nominal beneficiare should use all his influence to secure a good attendance.

Beyond that, he had no interest in it. The manager took the money. The outside public would probably regard a transaction of this kind as mean and shabby; but the idea of its being anything but a matter of course never entered Mr. M'Variety's head, or even the heads of his company. It was a usage of the profession, sanctified by time and custom. It is wonderful how such usages permeate the so-called profession to its topmost branches and its deepest roots. In the theatrical body politic everybody gets something out of somebody else by some quiet sub rosa arrangement which never appears aboveboard. You have seen poor wretched broken-down men in the streets carrying advertisement boards, sandwich fashion. Sharp misery has worn them to the bone; their clothes are mere shreds of dirty rags; hunger is in their looks, palsy is in their limbs. They crawl along with bent bodies and downcast eyes, as if they were seeking some spot whereon to lie down and die, some out-of-the-way dust-heap on which to shoot their mortal rubbish. You doubt if such poor, dilapidated, degraded tenements can possibly lodge immortal souls. Yet even these burlesques of humanity are victims to the prevailing usage, which begins with the leading tragedian and the prima donna. They are down in the manager's books for a shilling a day; but there is a middle man who takes the contract, and gives them ninepence.

When Madame Ernestine dismounted from her trained steed Constant, she hastened to the manager's room.

"Now, Monsieur M'Variety, about this benefit; dites-moi, I am dying to know."

"Well, countess, I mean to do the thing that's handsome."

"Half the receipts of the circus, eh?"

"Would you call that handsome?" Mr. M'Variety asked; "the circus will hold fifty pounds; the half of that is twenty-five."

"It is nothing, a bagatelle; but it is much for you—for a manager to give without being asked."

Madame Ernestine had not a high opinion of managers; she believed that even their virtues leaned to vice's side.

"What would you think, then," said M'Variety, with a sly twinkle in his eye, "if I were to give you the whole receipts of the circus?"

"What should I think? I should think, Monsieur Mac, that you were un bon enfant, the prince of managers, one who is all heart—un ange—and something besides."

She paused, and added the last words slowly and significantly.

"And what besides?" the manager asked.

"Why, Monsieur Mac, I should think besides all this that you had your reasons. Ha!"

"Well, well," said Mr. M'Variety, waving off his little attempt to assume the character of a generous benefactor, "that's nothing to you, you know. You shall have the benefit, and, if you make good use of your swell friends, I don't see why you shouldn't net a hundred pounds by it."

"A hundred pounds! Ah! that is something!" cried the countess; and her eyes glinted, as if she had seen the money lying before her in bright golden sovereigns.

"And mind," said M'Variety, "I shan't charge you a farthing for expenses."

The manager made a merit of this, and the countess was good enough to recognise it.

"Believe me, Monsieur Mac," she said, "I appreciate your generosity; you will, on this occasion, kindly refrain from helping yourself to a share of that which does not belong to you. That is a merit in a directeur, and I give you credit for it. I could embrace you."

M'Variety was grateful for this reciprocation of good feeling, but he was a little alarmed at the hint of an embrace. He would as soon have been embraced by a boa-constrictor or a Bengal tiger.

"Well, then," he said, "consider everything arranged."

"Fort bien," said the countess; "and the day?"

"This day week," said the manager; "the last night of the season—Friday."

CHAPTER LIII. THE LITTLE BIRD.

No woman, however amiable her disposition, or however loving her nature, could have entertained a sentiment of affection for Mr. Francis Blunt, once she came to know him and fathom the depths of his base and worthless character. Francis Blunt married Mademoiselle Valérie, a gay, heartless, unscrupulous, pleasure-loving actress of the Paris theatres. Estrangement and separation were inevitable. Blunt, like many other vain fools, had an ambition to marry an actress, and he married one. Mademoiselle Valérie had an ambition to marry a rich English milord who could keep her in luxury and splendour, and she married the man who seemed to fulfil her desires. But both were deceived. Sitting in his box and gazing at her in her paint and smiles on the stage, Blunt thought Valérie an angel. Sitting by his own fireside, linked to her by the bonds of holy matrimony—save the mark!—and gazing at her without her paint and her smiles, he found her a devil. Meeting Blunt behind the scenes and at gay supper-parties, where he spent his money like water, and was lionised and addressed as milord,

Valérie regarded the Englishman as a person of boundless wealth. Living with him in the same house, knowing all his concerns, encountering his duns, and witnessing all the mean shifts to which he was occasionally driven, she speedily learned the bitter, and to her maddening truth, that she had married a spendthrift, a rouse, an adventurer, a beggar.

To Blunt, the discovery that his wife was a selfish, cold-hearted, unbearable woman, was a surprise and a disappointment; but nothing more. He was not squeamish; moral scruples never troubled him; he was perfectly indifferent to the opinion of the world. He could separate from her, give her a maintenance—or promise her one—and return to his old, gay, reckless life.

But Valérie's position was different. Had she been the best woman that ever breathed, she could not have smothered her contempt for the heartless coxcomb who had so bitterly deceived her, and afterwards so cruelly used her. But Valérie was not a good woman; she was a female harpy, whose whole aim and ambition was to be richly dressed, to have plenty of money, and to live in a constant round of pleasures. Such being her character, she did not merely despise Blunt, she hated him with all the fierceness and malignity of a fiend. And her loathing hatred of him culminated and came to its darkest and worst just at the time when a true woman's nature becomes most softened, most tender, most capable of trust and love and forgiveness.

The time of her fiercest and most implacable hatred of her husband was when she first heard the cry of her new-born babe. It should have been a new bond of union. It was the cause of irremediable and implacable hate. This sham mildred—this copper-gilt calf before whose lacquered magnificence she had fallen down—fallen down, not to be lifted up to the coveted pinnacle of splendour and gaiety and pleasure, but to be ruthlessly trodden over, debased, degraded, spurned with the foot of contempt—this man, her husband, had robbed her of the sunshine of her youth, cheated her of her golden opportunity, darkened the high noon of her days, and at length cast her from him, leaving her with the consciousness—to her a hateful one—of being a mother, the mother, too, of his child.

This terrible Frenchwoman was impenetrable; her heart—if she had a heart—was a fortress of implacability. She was so cold, so indurated in her hate, so fierce in her purpose of revenge, that one might have suspected her of being literally possessed by a devil. She hated Lily, the infant, because she was the child of the man who had deceived her, ill used her, and disappointed her of her selfish expectations; she hated Lily, the girl, because, while she promised to be an instrument of vengeance in her hands, she was yet a burden and a trouble to her. If she relented a little towards her now, it was not because of the awakening of any latent spark of maternal feeling in her breast of steel, but be-

cause she was making some profit out of the girl, and saw a prospect of making still more. She relented towards her as a brute of a costermonger will relent towards the ass that bears his burden, and earns for him his meat and his drink and his pleasures.

After her interview with Mr. M'Variety, the countess was quite pleasant to the girl, after a fashion. Lily had never known her speak so kindly before. Poor Lily! She was thankful for very small mercies in the way of kindness. She was grateful for the veriest crumbs. The countess returned to her dressing-room with a look of triumph in her face, singing a snatch of one of her favourite French songs.

"You perceive, mademoiselle, that I am gay this evening," she said, addressing Lily.

"Yes, ma—" Lily paused at the word, and the countess took her up short, slapping her riding-habit with her whip.

"Yes, madam, you were about to say. I did not tell you that you were to call me mother; but that you were to regard me as such, and obey me as such. I hate the word. You rejoice that I am gay—*n'est-ce pas?*"

"Yes, I am glad that you are gay," Lily replied.

"Bien," said the countess, "that is dutiful; and you shall be rewarded; you shall sit up with me to supper in my new château. Quick! Assist me to undress."

This was the kindness for which Lily was so grateful.

The countess submitted herself to the hands of her *fille-de-chambre* without indulging in the usual ebullitions of temper, and when she was dressed, insisted upon Lily walking by her side, and talking to her on her way through the gardens to the Cottage.

"We shall live here," she said, "until the commencement of the summer season, as *Monsieur le Directeur* calls it; and in the mean time I shall teach you to ride. You know nothing, you are ignorant, useless. I work for my living; why should not you for yours? I work for you, now. By-and-by, when I am old and can no longer give an exposition of the *haute-école*, you will show your gratitude for all I have done for you by working for me. Will you not? *Répondez-moi donc!*"

"I will do anything you ask me," Lily replied. But she shuddered at the idea of becoming a horse-rider.

"*Très bien!*" said the countess, "you are still dutiful, so you shall sup with me. *Allons! Entrons!*"

There was more good news for the countess; another pleasant surprise.

A servant had called with a large hamper containing an elegant supper and several bottles of wine. Mrs. Snuffburn was at the foot of the stairs, in a high state of excitement with the intelligence.

"Who was the person who brought this—what you call it—*hampaire?*" the countess asked.

"It was brought by a livery-servant, mum,"

said the housekeeper; "but he didn't leave no message, except that it was for Madame Ernestine."

"Did he not say who sent it?"

"No, mum. I asked him if there was compliments with it, and the young man, which he had top-boots on, mum, and a cockade in his 'at, said as there wasn't no compliments with it, but there was half a dozen bottles of sparkling, which was better, he thought."

The countess opened the hamper, and her eyes gleamed with pleasure, not so much at the dainties which it contained, as at the thought of her rising fortunes, and the influence which she was once more exercising upon the gay votaries of pleasure.

"No matter," she said; "it is an elegant petit souper, come whence it may, and I am hungry. Let it be laid à l'instant. And that corbeau, that ogre, that ganache; said I should have no luck! Why, it rains luck—rains châteaux, benefits, pheasants, champagne. Ha! what have we here? Cognac. One bottle in the corner! A good thought; vous êtes un bon enfant, monsieur—you understand me—qui que vous soyez."

The supper was laid in the gilded apartment, and the countess and Lily sat down together. The countess ate and drank of everything, condescending even to patronise the champagne, but poor Lily could scarcely taste a thing. The countess's declaration of her intention to make her a horse-rider had completely taken away her appetite, and made her feel sick and faint.

"Eat, child, mais mangez donc?" the countess said to her, almost fiercely, as she herself gnawed wolfishly at the leg of a pheasant.

"I have no appetite," Lily said, languidly.

"I—I do not feel very well."

"No appetite!" cried the countess. "I understand; no appetite—ha! ha! You will recover from that malady. Ma foi! when you come to be my age you will have an appetite."

And she went on eating with her fingers, and gnawing the bones, and almost snarling over them.

"If you cannot eat, perhaps you can drink. There, take some champagne. I will not grudge it you. It cost me nothing."

She poured—or flung rather—the bright bubbling wine into a tumbler and pushed it towards the girl. Lily put the glass to her lips timidly, and sipped at its sparkling contents.

"Drink it up—videz le verre," cried the countess, angrily. "I have no patience with such mincing pretences. Drink, I say!"

Lily, clutching the glass desperately, drank its contents to the last drop in sheer despair, as she would have drunk poison.

"Now, you may go; va-t'en—there is your room. It was intended for me; but I have given it up to you. You see how I love you—what a good mother I am." And she grinned horribly.

Lily was only too glad to obey. She was always thankful when bedtime came, that she might seek refuge from her sorrows in the for-

getfulness of a sound sleep, or in the unrealities of a pleasant dream. She took a little candle that had been placed on the side-table for her, and retired to the dainty white chamber; but she was too weary, too eager to shut her eyes and bury her head, to do more than bestow a languid glance upon its tasteful furniture and neat appointments. She had eaten scarcely anything, and the champagne which her mother had forced her to drink made her heavy and drowsy. She put out her light, and undressed and crept to bed in the dark. She began to say her prayers—she never omitted them, though she might have begun to think that there was no ear in Heaven for her, so often had she repeated them and yet no deliverance—she began her prayers, but, as had often happened before, when she was worn out with her dragging-chain of misery, she lost herself among the words, and fell asleep murmuring them.

How long she had been asleep she knew not, but she was suddenly aroused by a great gleam of light streaming through the crevices of her door. She thought for a moment that the Cottage was on fire, and was about to scream and give the alarm, when she heard her mother's voice. She was singing

Gai, gai, gai,
Vive la gaudriole.

Lily listened, and heard her mother mixing up the names of Milord Carlton, and Sir William Long, and the Marquis Greyfaunt—le Marquis Greyfond, as she called him—in a succession of nonsense verses, with the same gay, reckless chorus. Anon, she broke into another strain—French dithyrambs which need not be repeated. They were about love, and bagatelle, and cognac.

The light seemed to be growing stronger and more intense, as if the room beyond were burning fast. Lily rose from her bed and crept to the door, which she had neglected to close. It stood slightly ajar. She knelt down and looked through the opening.

The countess, her mother, was sitting in the gilded arm-chair, her feet resting upon the gilt eagle which formed a footstool, holding a glass in her hand, and singing. She had lighted every burner in the great chandelier designed for halls of dazzling light, and, in the midst of the gilding and brass and lacquer and the blaze of gas, trolled forth her reckless French songs. Lily was relieved to find that the house was not on fire, as she at first feared; but she was inexpressibly shocked to see her mother in that dreadful state. Her first impulse was to retire, and once more hide herself under the bedclothes; but she felt herself rooted to the spot as if by a fascination. She remained gazing at the extraordinary scene until the woman rose, and with an unsteady step approached the door of her chamber. Lily retreated immediately, crept into bed, and feigned to be asleep.

The next instant the countess entered and approached the bed. She paused for a moment

and looked down upon the face of the girl, seemingly wrapped in sleep. Lily felt the light from the chandelier in the other room streaming full and strong upon her closed eyes, and through her eyelashes she could see her mother looking down upon her with a strange wild expression that terrified her—terrified her only for a moment. When the thought suddenly flashed through her brain that the Wild Woman had come to murder her, she resigned herself, and closed her eyes firmly, in anticipation of the stroke that would rid her at once of life and of misery. She was sensible of something approaching close to her, and muttered a prayer. She felt a glow of heat upon her cold brow, and held her breath for the stroke to fall. It fell. It was a fierce, feverish, savage kiss imprinted upon her cheek by her mother—for the first time in the girl's memory.

The countess seemed to repent of what she had done. The moment she had kissed her daughter, she drew herself up to her full height, her face reddened, her eyes flashed fire, and she smote herself upon the mouth savagely, as if to castigate her lips for the weakness of which they had been guilty.

The countess retired immediately. Lily watched her with bated breath, and listened. She saw the lights go out in the gilded chamber; she heard her mother stamping and raging in the bedchamber adjoining. The chairs, or the chest of drawers, or the towel-horse, or something had offended her. Then all was still. Lily tried to compose herself to sleep; but sleep would not come, she was too much agitated. She thought, as she always did when harassed and perplexed, of Edgar. He was her star in the dark; the pole to which her heart turned like the trembling needle in the compass of the cast-away mariner. The thought passed through her mind once again that if she were only Edgar's equal in position, her misery would cease, and all would be well. Still she could not sleep. She rose, lighted her candle, and tried to read. She could not read. Her attention wandered to anything except the page upon which her eyes were bent—wandered at the end of all to the image of the handsome Edgar Greyfaunt.

Suddenly her glance fell upon the white cover of the toilet-table. Woven into its texture, there was the figure of a bird holding a leaf in its mouth. Looking about, Lily discovered behind the looking-glass a hair-brush, the back and handle of which were ornamented with mother-of-pearl. That also bore the figure of the little bird holding the leaf. She had seen that device before, and remembered it well, yet could not tell where she had seen it, or when. Why did she puzzle her throbbing brain about so trivial a matter? She could not say why, and yet she did trouble her brain about it. She went back over her whole life in pursuit of that little bird—back to Signor Ventimillioni's show, to Madame de Kergolay's, to the Pension Marcassin, to the Bunycastle, to the shop of

Cutwig and Co.; and she found it not. Now and again she thought she had caught it; but the little bird fluttered away and escaped from her hands. But at last she hunted it into a corner. The little bird had led her to the hotel at Greenwich, where she sat upon Sir William Long's knee and played with his seals, and with the great signet-ring on his finger. It was upon that signet-ring, and upon a certain seal, that she had first seen the image of this little bird with the leaf in its mouth. It was a crest. How did this crest come here?

Lily asked herself the question, and a thought rushed into her brain, bringing back some words long since spoken, some feelings long since faded, like early leaves, and filling her breast with a storm of conflicting thoughts. She looked at the crest again. There was a motto embroidered underneath. It was "Spes et fortuna." Fortuna? That must mean fortune; but what was "Spes"?

Lily fell to sleep at last, with the word upon her lips, wondering.

THE MOST NORTHERLY TOWN IN THE WORLD.

HAMMERFEST is the most northerly town in the world. It is in the province of Finmarken, and is situated on an island, under lat. 70 deg. 49 min. Towards the south-west it is hemmed in by steep cliffs. It is truly a barren spot, though once it is said to have been well wooded. As a commercial port, Hammerfest is of some importance. During the summer months the harbour is crowded with Russian, English, French, and other vessels. The principal trade consists in dried codfish, a large quantity of which is sent to the Mediterranean ports to be consumed by the Roman Catholics of Southern Europe.

Were it not for the climatic influence that the Gulf Stream exerts, Hammerfest, and indeed the whole northern parts of the Scandinavian peninsula, would be uninhabitable, and as ice-bound as Boothia Felix, Victoria Land, &c., and those desolate regions in the other hemisphere which lie under the same parallel of latitude. But, as it is, the sea never freezes along the whole of the west coast of Norway; icebergs are rarely or never seen; and it is also owing to this that the mean temperature in winter at the North Cape and at Christiania, though thirteen degrees of latitude lie between them, is one and the same. Agriculture, of course, cannot be carried on to any extent in the northern parts of Norway, but even at Hammerfest barley will ripen, and potatoes will occasionally arrive at maturity. At Alten, however, which is six degrees to the south, vegetable growth goes on with a rapidity which is quite marvellous. "Barley will grow two and a half inches, and peas three inches in the twenty-four hours, and this for several consecutive days;" while turnips, radishes, and lettuces will grow everywhere, where human beings are to be found to cultivate them.

During the summer, which may be reckoned to last from the middle of May till towards the latter part of August, the port of Hammerfest presents a lively appearance. The weather then is intensely hot, for, as the sun never sets from July 19th till August 24th, the earth and the air can never become cool.

We would recommend the traveller who may be bound for the far north, to see the midnight sun, or to place his foot on the extreme verge of the European continent, not to forget to bring with him a liberal supply of eau-de-Cologne. He will find it useful at Hammerfest, for the whole place reeks with a fishy odour. There is a tolerable hotel, perhaps rather dear in its charges; but to be able to drink English porter, champagne, and even to play billiards under the same degree of latitude as that which runs over Disco Island, one must not grumble.

A good deal of eider-down is brought to Hammerfest for exportation, though not so much as formerly, owing to the reckless way in which these birds have been slaughtered. The Norwegian Storting has, however, recently passed a law to protect them. The eider-duck abounds along the whole coast of Norway. Generally speaking, they build their nests on the small islands which fringe the coast, though they will often repair to the mainland, building close to the farm-houses and fishermen's huts, even under the very doorsteps.

The best eider-down is taken from the nests, which the female bird has plucked from her own breast. This is termed "live down," in contradistinction to the "dead down," which is stripped off the dead bird. A quarter of a century ago, it was by no means a rarity for small vessels to bring from five to six thousand pounds of eider-down to this port from Spitzbergen. The usual price for eider-down in London is about a guinea the pound, but I have bought it direct from Hammerfest at about one quarter the price.

A great quantity of multer berries (*Rubus chamaemorus*) is exported from Hammerfest, principally for the Christiania market. These have a much finer aroma than is the case with those that are grown in the southern parts of the country. To give some idea of the importance in which these fruit are held, it will be sufficient to mention that the Norwegian Storting passed a law in 1854 rendering any one amenable to a fine who plucked the berries on the "multer lands" in Finmark and Nordland, unless to eat on the spot.

I can scarcely imagine anything but necessity inducing a man to pitch his tent so far north as Hammerfest, and yet a friend of mine, who has lived there several years, declares it to be a delightful residence, and one which he would on no account leave. It should be added, that he does a large business as a general merchant, that he has taken unto himself a Norwegian wife, and has several pledges of affection. From May 24 to July 19 the sun never sinks below the horizon, but for a corresponding time in the winter not a glimpse of him is to be seen. But

it is a mistake to think that even then there is total darkness during the daytime. At mid-day it is usually sufficiently light to be able to read without candles, for the moon and the stars shine with a much greater brilliancy the further north one goes; while the reflexion of the aurora borealis on the snow contributes in no little degree to illumine the scene. I have witnessed some very brilliant appearances of the northern lights in the south of Norway, but have never been so fortunate as to see them in the far north. The phenomenon is said to be extremely beautiful in Finmarken. The following description may serve to give a faint idea: "Across the sky to the north stretched a white arch of light, with a span as broad as a rainbow. A large streak shaped like a comet lay within the arch, and this was continually changing both its figure and position. Sun, moon, or stars never gave so lovely, so hallowed a light." At times it appears like a curtain of fire falling perpendicularly to the earth and lifting again; at others, like a golden shower; or, again, like a huge fan, displaying all the colours of the rainbow.

During my visit to the north I had occasion to pass a few days at Hammerfest, waiting for the steamer round the North Cape. What with playing billiards and catching codfish, we managed to pass the time. It is rather good fun this fishing. They called it "piking." At the end of a long plaited horsehair line, several fathoms in length, a piece of lead is attached, armed at the extremity with two hooks, like a gorge bait for pike. It bears the very faintest resemblance to a small fish, so that it was always a matter of surprise to us that any fish could be so stupid as to take it. But codfish are very stupid creatures, and the Norwegian word for them, "Torsk," is, perhaps, the most contemptuous epithet you can apply to any one. The mode of fishing is as follows: Let the line run out till it touches the bottom, then raise it three or four feet, and keep jerking it. Presently you feel a snatch. Now is the time to draw in quickly hand over hand. We caught several fine fellows; the largest, I should think, weighed fifteen pounds, and it was rare sport, increased, perhaps, by the fact of my friend B., in a moment of excitement in pulling up a big one, losing his balance and toppling overboard.

There were several Lapps in Hammerfest when we were there, bartering reindeer skins for the necessaries of life, especially for brandy and tobacco. They are queer little fellows, more agreeable at a distance, I am inclined to think. I speak feelingly, for once I had to pass the night in a Lapp hut, having been overtaken by a storm in the interior of Finmarken. That they never wash I need scarcely say, but they wear next the skin a thick woollen jersey, which I feel convinced is only changed once, and that is when it is quite worn out, and has to be replaced by another. It will not, therefore, be a matter of surprise when I remark that I found them very lively companions during the night.

It is a strange phenomenon, but I never

stayed twenty-four hours in any place in Norway without having at least one invitation to go after a bear. Once, but only once, was I fool enough to accept it, for after having lain flat on my stomach all night in close proximity to the putrid carcase of a horse, and getting nearly devoured by mosquitoes, and, of course, seeing nothing, I made a vow never to go bear hunting any more. There are, however, several bears in Finmarken, and large numbers are annually slaughtered by the Lapps, mostly in the winter-time or early spring. The account a merchant in Hammerfest gave me of a bear hunt put me much in mind of rabbiting at home.

When the ground is covered with snow, the hunter repairs to the bear-den, whither Bruin has been previously tracked. He generally takes with him three or four companions. All of them go on "skie," the Norwegian snow-shoe, whereby they can skim over the surface of the snow at railroad speed. They are armed with rifles, axes, and bear-spears, long poles about eight to ten feet in length, furnished at one end with a sharp iron head. On arriving at the entrance to the den, which much resembles a fox-earth, they range themselves round it. One of their number now tries to arouse Bruin from his profound slumber by "stirring him up with a long pole." This generally has the desired effect, for presently the bear comes sleepily to the hole and puts his head out to see what all the fuss is about. Down comes an axe upon his "devoted head," which is quickly drawn in again. Again the pole is inserted, and at last Bruin gets so savage that he determines to make a bolt. Gathering himself up, he makes a dart out, like a rabbit with a ferret behind him. The dogs are then slipped, and set off in full chase. Bruin is easily caught up, for his heavy weight sinks deep into the snow. Squatting on his haunches to secure his most vulnerable parts against the attacks of his nimble assailants, he deals out tremendous blows right and left with his powerful paws. Woe to the luckless dog if he comes in for one of them. Meanwhile the hunter comes up and calls his dogs off. He then takes his cap off and throws it in Bruin's face, and defies him to the contest. If the bear accepts it, he rears himself on his hind legs and rushes at the hunter, who now, for the first time, uses his rifle, and generally Bruin succumbs to his bullet; for the Lapps are unerring marksmen.

But even though mortally wounded, the beast will not "throw up the sponge" in token of defeat, but dashes against his adversary, who keeps him at a respectful distance with his bear-spear, till the others come up and administer the "coup de grace." On one such occasion, it happened that the hunter's spear broke short off. The bear, though mortally wounded, was still dangerous. It managed to reach the hunter, and gave him such a hug in his paws as nearly to squeeze the life out of his diminutive body. "But I knew," said the plucky little Lapp, "that his strength would soon fail, and that my 'pels' (reindeer skin)

would protect me against his claws; so watching a good opportunity, I plunged my knife into his heart."

But it is not the men only that are good hunters. One day a Lapp woman went out to fish on a lake, accompanied by her son, who was fourteen years old. When they had caught a sufficient supply, they landed on a part of the shore which was thickly overgrown with fir and underwood. Presently the woman's quick eye fell on a large heap of boughs, reeds, moss, &c., and, on nearer inspection, she found a large hole underneath the mass of rubbish, and felt convinced it was the entrance to a bear's "Hi," or cave. She was a courageous and resolute little body, and, nothing daunted by the discovery, nor reflecting that she was alone, hastened back to the boat to fetch her axe and rifle (for a Lapp woman generally goes armed, and is usually an expert shot). Now, her sisters in other parts of the civilised world would most probably have been frightened out of their wits, and have beat a speedy retreat under such circumstances. Her only anxiety was lest the bear should get off.

On returning, she proceeded to cut down a small fir sapling, which she pointed at one end, and gave it the boy to bridle about in the hole to ascertain whether it was occupied or not, while she stood with uplifted axe a little on one side. No sooner was the pole inserted than out came the head of a monstrous she bear, and down came the axe on her skull with such force that it remained sticking fast in the wound, and accompanied Bruin as she retreated to the furthest end of the cave. Time being up for round number two, and her opponent not putting in an appearance, she determined to try the effect of a shot. No sooner had she fired down the hole, than out bolted a cub about the size of a sheep dog, which her son cleverly managed to catch hold of by the hind leg. But it was too strong for the little fellow, and, after dragging him for some distance, managed to get away. Determined, however, not to lose him, mother and son went in pursuit, and speedily overtook the animal, which had taken to the water. A few well-administered taps with the end of the oar soon rendered him hors de combat.

Having secured him, the courageous little woman went back again to the "Hi," and gave it another stirring up. But all was still. Next she fired a second shot, but nothing moved. Concluding that the bear must be dead, or else have escaped during her absence, she determined to dig her out, a work of no small labour. Success, however, attended her exertions, for at length she found the bear lying quite dead, with the axe still sticking in her cleft skull, and, by her side, another cub as big as the first, with a bullet wound through his neck, also dead.

No mean achievement for a woman and her boy!

I think the midnight sun is to be seen in fuller perfection from the deck of a steamer

than from land. One evening, after leaving Hammerfest, we were all assembled on deck to witness its setting and rising, if thus it can be termed. It was about eleven o'clock. The sky was of a brilliant gold-colour, and the sea lay all around us like a burnished mirror. In the zenith it assumed a delicate rose-coloured tint, merging into an apple green. The effect of the sunlight on the bluff headlands was wondrously beautiful, for, as the sun sank lower and lower, chameleon-like their tints kept changing, till at last they seemed to be bathed in a vermilion hue. It was now midnight by the chronometer. In a few minutes we noticed the sun gradually rising higher and higher; and now, strange to say, the colours we had noticed before its setting were of a totally different hue. Altogether it was the most lovely and varied scene I have ever witnessed. Day had succeeded night almost imperceptibly. It required no little attention to prevent confusion in our journals. I can well imagine that one can readily "lose a day" up there.

TAKEN IN TOW.

"WILL you take the oath of allegiance, sirree? Answer me that, Mister Britisher," said the Federal commander, very harshly.

"I must decline doing anything of the sort," was my answer. "I, as an Englishman, and a mere temporary sojourner in the States, have nothin'; whatever to do with this unhappy struggle, and——"

"And yet we found you doctorin' them rebel scum, didn't we?" roughly asked a stout man, who sat on the colonel's left hand, and who was, I believe, Deputy Provost Marshal of the force, which, under General Sturgis, was scourging the counties that lie between Grand Gulf and Bolivar, in the State of Mississippi. And the speaker emphasised his meaning by pointing with a fat forefinger at several ghastly figures, some with bandaged limbs, others with pieces of bloodstained rag wrapped around their heads, who lay motionless on straw at the other end of the barn. These poor wretches, who might have been thought dead but for the low moan that from time to time was wrung by pain from one or other of their dismal company, were my patients—Confederate guerrillas. They were too severely wounded to share the flight of their comrades when the Northern troops arrived, and had been of necessity abandoned. As for myself, how I got into the scrape in which I found myself is soon told: I was merely one of the many young surgeons, who, finding no sphere of action in the crowded old country, had made my way across the Atlantic without greatly bettering my prospects by doing so. I had just returned from Pike's Peak, whither I had been lured by flattering reports of the lucrative practice to be obtained there among the miners, and had found that all is not silver that glitters on the slopes of the Rocky Mountains. While still in that savage region, and uncertain as to my future

course, I had received a letter addressed to me at St. Louis by a friend in South America. This gentleman, an engineer, high in the employ of the Argentine Republic, had written to suggest that I should establish myself at a town some leagues beyond Buenos Ayres, a thriving place, where numerous European emigrants had established sheep-farms and factories, and where his influence would avail to procure me the post of chief surgeon to the government hospital. In my position, such an offer was not to be refused, and it was while making my way to New Orleans, with a view to embarking for Buenos Ayres, that I had fallen in with an armed band of Confederates, and had been in a manner impressed into rendering my professional services to their wounded.

All this I had related, frankly and freely, to the members of the Federal court-martial, producing at the same time my friend's letter, and other papers that corroborated my statement. However, those into whose hands I had fallen persisted in regarding me as a prisoner of war, inasmuch as I had been found in attendance on rebel patients, and my plea of neutrality was derided. It was decided that I should be sent to General Butler, then commanding the department, and that my future destiny should depend upon his good will and pleasure.

"You've escaped merely by the skin of your teeth, Britisher, I can tell you," said an old captain of artillery, by far the most good natured of the party, when he came afterwards to the negro hut to which I had been removed, to communicate to me the sentence of the court-martial. "Provost Noakes was for severity, and so was the colonel, but the major and I begged you off."

"Severity?" asked I, in some perplexity. "May I ask what the word implies in this case?"

My informant directed a jet of tobacco-juice against the whitewashed wall, and watched the result with great apparent interest, before he replied with the most matter-of-course air possible: "Just hanging, mister! But you've got off cheap. You're to go down river in one of the gunboats, the old Mohawk, most like, and I'll give a hint to Captain Hopkins to treat you well."

"But my patients? Poor fellows, they are not in a fit condition to be left," said I, lingering. However, the artillery officer curtly informed me that I should have quite enough to do in minding on which side my own slapjacks were buttered, that hempen cravats were easily come by, and that I had better be off before the colonel changed his mind once more, a thing likely enough to happen, since he was generally "ugly after liquoring," an expression which I took to mean that the colonel was cross in his cups. And further debate was cut short by the arrival of a file of soldiers with fixed bayonets, under whose care I was marched off, having only just time to snatch my valise and medicine-chest, and to utter a word or two of thanks to my rugged preserver. The latter stood in the

doorway of the hut, and shouted after me as I went:

"If it's the Mohawk, give Captain M'Causland's compliments, and say I'd be obliged to the skipper to give you a berth aft. Abe Hopkins knows me a few."

The Mohawk it was, and Captain Abimalech Hopkins received me with tolerable graciousness in consequence of my mention of his friend's name. He was a tall, raw-boned New Englander, one of those Cape Cod men, about whom there seems to be a sort of salt-water atmosphere, and indeed he was a thorough sailor. He was rough and shrewd, having been boatswain of a frigate in the United States Navy, and having received promotion to command a river-going gunboat when the demand for skilled officers began to exceed the supply. The Mohawk was a true war-vessel, however, armed with two very heavy pivot-guns, and protected as to her bows by some thin plates of iron. She had an armed crew, and a strong guard of marines, and was deep laden with powder, caps, clothing, and various stores medical and military, which she had taken in at Columbus, and which were to be delivered at New Orleans. The voyage down stream was by no means secure, in spite of the exertions of the Federals to keep the navigation clear.

Independent of the fortified places in Southern hands, the banks swarmed with guerillas, and vessels passing down were so continually fired at, that it was usual for whole flotillas of flat boats and lighters to remain in some safe spot, awaiting convoy. As it depended on the discretion of the commanders of the Federal gunboats to give or refuse the desired protection, and as valuable cargoes were constantly exposed to damage or detention for lack of escort, considerable bribes were often paid to the captains, under the various euphuisms of poundage, salvage, and premium. And the Mississippi station was reckoned, on that account, as only less profitable than the duty of blockading Charleston.

Captain Hopkins made no particular secret of his own transactions in that line, and he naively complained to me, as the steamer headed down the yellow river, of the ill fortune that had this time attended him. He had a few thousand dollars on freight, he said, but not a red cent's worth of dry goods or provisions for the New Orleans market, while, as for cotton, the most gainful article of commerce, he conceived that not a pound more could be brought in, all available stores having either been carried inland, or burned, to save it from capture by "them pesky guerillas," for whom the old seaman entertained a rooted abhorrence. As regarded myself, I had no cause to complain of my treatment, as a cabin passage was allotted me, and I was allowed the run of the boat on giving my parole not to attempt escape.

"Mind, Captain Hopkins," said I, half seriously, "I only promise not to run away at the stopping places down river. I by no means mean to pledge myself to remain a prisoner,

rescue or no rescue, so if the Confederates take the gunboat, I hold myself free to go where I please."

To which Captain Hopkins grimly rejoined, that if such a thing should occur, I was welcome to "make tracks," but that I need not build many hopes on so frail a foundation. The vessel, he added, would run past Vicksburg in the night, so as to prevent any chance of being sunk by the fire of the hostile batteries, and as for guerillas, he should like to see them try to meddle with Uncle Sam's property under his charge. As he brought his broad hand down with a sounding slap upon the huge Parrott gun that was mounted amidships, and looked proudly at the trim neatness of the well-cared-for steamer, I could not but own that my chances of release in the manner hinted at were infinitesimally small.

As the captain had anticipated, we ran past Vicksburg under cloud of night, and thus escaped any unwelcome attentions from the Confederate batteries, and the greater part of our onward course lay through a district for the most part in Federal occupation. We saw, as we skirted the left bank of the river, the frequent flash of arms, and crowded together on the deck to watch the progress of the long straggling columns of blue-coated infantry, the clouds of dust raised by the passage of the cavalry and guns, and the innumerable array of white tilted waggons that crawled in the rear. At Natchez, where a strong garrison had been posted under shelter of some earthworks, just as we were starting, after taking in fresh fuel, we were hailed from a canoe which a couple of negro boatmen paddled towards us, and a tall man, in a sort of nondescript uniform, with shoulder-straps and a narrow gold edging, came clambering up our side-ladder, and asked for the captain of the Mohawk. In spite of his semi-military garb, the new comer, who had a broad-brimmed hat, and a cigar between his lips, looked like anything but a soldier, and by the pen behind his ear I conjectured him to belong to one of the civil departments of the army.

A word or two from the stranger appeared to produce a talismanic effect upon our commander, and after a brief conference in the latter's cabin, the two worthies came on deck again, evidently on very good terms. The tall man was introduced to the lieutenants and midshipmen, and also to the marine officer and myself, as Dr. Amulius Cook, storekeeper in the United States army, and one who was to be our shipmate for the remainder of the voyage. And as the canoe slowly made its way back to shore, and the Mohawk resumed her course down stream, Dr. Amulius, or, as he chose to abbreviate his name, Dr. Muly Cook, who was extremely frank and communicative, did me the favour to converse a good deal with myself.

"Your skipper's a rough specimen; wood with the bark on," said the doctor, with even more than the usual drawl and nasal twang that marks the genuine New Englander, "but he's clear grit, and a real American. I say, weren't you

surprised to see how 'nation polite he was to me, all in a moment?" he continued, as his little black eyes twinkled knowingly.

I smiled as I made answer that Captain Hopkins was probably conciliated by the sight of the Federal uniform. He certainly was not equally bland to all comers, for, at Natchez itself, he had somewhat roughly, on the plea of "public necessity," repulsed a merchant captain who came on board with a written requisition for convoy. When I related this to my new acquaintance, he laughed in a peculiar silent manner, but with obvious enjoyment, and told me how matters really stood. He, Dr. Amulius Cook, was in charge of a string of four barges or flat boats, laden with cotton, which were lying at a place called Hautpré, five or six miles lower down than Natchez. This cotton had been part of the booty seized in a late raid of the Federal troops in the country traversed by the Big Black River, and to get it safely conveyed to New Orleans, where it would fetch an extremely high price, was the object of its custodian.

"You see, mister," said the doctor, as he slowly lighted his third cigar, "nothing riles them rebel hounds like taking off their cotton to market, and they burn every cent's worth as soon as they hear we're coming to fetch it, by reason of which prices rule awful high, and we shall realise a most cruel profit, or my name ain't 'Muly Cook, when we sell it on the mart, in New Orleans city."

"We!" said I, somewhat bewildered. "I beg your pardon, but did you not say the cotton was government property?"

The storekeeper laughed again. "Britisher," said he, "you don't understand American ways, you don't. We go ahead, we do, in Columbia happy land. Now, I'll make all clear as a glass of Taos whisky. See here; the cotton belongs to Uncle Sam, of course, but sold it must be. For that purpose, it is consigned to General Butler's brother, who does a smart trade now, on this cupful of yellow water we call the Mississippi, and the general gives a pass to permit its removal. Wall, sir, we've got to get the bales to New Orleans, and that's no joke, for there's more than one hornet's nest to pass, and we want convoy. We wait till we find a sensible skipper like Captain Hopkins, and we make it worth his while to take us in tow, right away down. Then the cotton's sold, and sold at a profit that whips creation, and commissary Butler, and storekeeper 'Muly Cook, and the skipper of the Mohawk, and Uncle Sam, are all the better for the dollars they share among 'em, don't you see? But here we are at Hautpré."

Sure enough, the Mohawk came to a dead stop in front of an insignificant little town, with its quaint wooden church, its score or two of small houses, bright with paint, or gleaming white as lime could make them, the fac-simile of many of the overgrown Creole villages that stud the lower Mississippi. Beside the wharf of this place lay four large-sized flat boats, lashed together, and piled high with cotton bales in

their coarse coverings of yellowish gunny cloth. These were apparently under the protection of a small guard of negro soldiers in the blue Federal uniform, who lolled about the untidy decks in every attitude indicative of careless repose, while a few boatmen, white and coloured, also lounged beside the cargo. These were the barges, with their precious freight, the value of which war and devastation had raised to so high a pitch, of which our new friend had spoken, and the broad hints he had given me as to the expected division of the profits of its sale, sufficed to explain the cheerful promptness with which the captain of the Mohawk consented to encumber himself with so unwieldy a charge. Tow-ropes were soon made fast to the steamer's stern and the broad prow of the leading flat-boat, and the armed vessel, tugging the laden barges after her, snorted and puffed her way sturdily but slowly down the river.

The rest of that morning's voyage was uneventful. Twice, indeed, we were fired on as we went past masked Confederate batteries among the tall reeds and cane-brake of the western shore, but the guns were mere six-pound field-pieces, and the aim bad and unsteady, and the Mohawk had merely to send a shower of grape-shot hissing and spattering among the green bushes of the bank, to drive away the invisible enemy. Whether the grape harmed the guerrillas I cannot say, but the light round shot directed against the Mohawk passed across her bows without any effect, and in both cases we escaped without so much as one casualty. And of those dashing assaults which the Southerners sometimes attempt by the help of canoes and rafts, when opportunity serves, there was little risk in this case. Five-and-thirty marines, fifty sailors and officers, were on board the gunboat, besides the coloured troops, perhaps a dozen in number, who occupied the barges. And the great guns of the Mohawk gave her an uncontested superiority.

At Berryville, where we took in firewood in the course of the afternoon, another passenger came on board. This was a lady, splendidly dressed, and attended by a black female servant, who presented herself in virtue of a pass signed by General Sturgis, and in which document all naval and military functionaries were required to protect and assist the bearer, Mrs. Gregg, wife of Senator Gregg, then in Washington for the service of his country. Captain Hopkins growled a little at the first suggestion of a fresh accession to our party in the little cabin, but the order from General Sturgis was a formal one, and the sturdy ex-boatswain was not exempt from the almost superstitious reverence for travelling womankind which his countrymen entertain.

Mrs. Gregg, however, politically speaking, threatened to prove a firebrand in our hitherto tranquil society. She was fiercely loyal, and her ardour for the "old flag" proved contagious, none of the other Americans liking to be outdone in verbal professions of attachment to the Union. I never shall forget what a flashing look of scorn

she gave me when I was introduced to her as an English surgeon who had been captured among rebels, and was now a paroled prisoner.

"Don't excuse yourself, sir, nor wound the ears of a loyal lady with remarks on the duty of common humanity," said Mrs. Gregg, eyeing me as if I had been a reptile. "I guess humanity to copperheads and rebel miscreants is often the worst cruelty to the noblest cause on earth, the cause of Freedom, sir, if you ever heard the word. I speak warmly, as the wife of a Union senator who has borne persecution and plunder for the sake of our glorious principles—Senator Titus Gregg, of Spanish Creek."

Mrs. Gregg was a fine dark-eyed woman, of perhaps, five-and-thirty, and her dress and manners were Parisian, but I very much regretted that she had come on board the boat at all, for she could speak but on one subject, or rather she contrived to make all topics bear upon the civil war, and her ardour seemed contagious. Before long, captain, lieutenants, and all, save myself, were launched into a tide of partisan discussion, and the bitterest tongue of the party belonged to Dr. Cook, whose abhorrence of the rebels knew no bounds. But Mrs. Gregg did not limit her sympathy for the Federation to words alone. She had some cases of champagne with her luggage, and also some French brandy, which were being removed from the cellars of her country-house to her mansion in New Orleans, and a good many silver-necked flasks found their way by supper-time to the state cabin, while Mrs. Gregg insisted on imparting a liberal share of the cognac to the crew and marines, "the gallant defenders of our holy Union." To this Captain Hopkins demurred. He had a very few good seamen, drafted from the regular navy, and whose superior efficiency and discipline served to leaven the rest, but the majority of his men were the sweepings of the New Orleans quays, mixed with lanky untutored lads from Missouri, who were more at home in driving a cart than in navigation. He was very strict with this molley ship's company, and his master-at-arms, a grim old whale-fisher, kept a vigilant watch lest spirits should be smuggled on board, as it was evident that a free supply of whisky would destroy all subordination among the crew. However, Mrs. Gregg was bent upon hospitality towards the "brave fellows" forward, and the captain, probably computing that a dozen of Naatz would not produce a very serious effect when divided among eighty sailors and marines, grudgingly consented to permit that number of bottles to be distributed to the Mohawk's men.

How well I remember that supper in the gunboat's cabin, the popping of corks, the rattle of knives and forks, and the flow of champagne and noisy conversation, which all tended to one subject, the war! Such bragging and boasting, such outspoken enthusiasm for the Union, and such vituperation of the rebels, it had not yet been my lot to hearken to. Mrs. Gregg had struck the key-note, and the whole of the party took up the same strain, in no measured terms.

To hear them, it would have appeared that the solid earth might be expected to sink beneath the sea, and the order of nature to be suspended, should the Secessionists triumph. But of that there was little prospect. Indeed, so loudly were the rebels described as starving, cowardly, dejected, and conquered, that there really seemed to be little credit in crushing down such hordes of hungry wretches. The noisy talk, and the clatter of glasses and plates, made my head ache: so, glad of an excuse to leave a scene that had no interest for me, I slipped away, and went on deck.

The skylight of the cabin had been raised to admit air, and through the filmy mosquito-nets I could see the group around the table. It struck me, by the flushed faces and vacant stare of the majority, the young lieutenants, and the marine officer, that Senator Gregg's wine must be very strong indeed. The captain preferred ration rum, as he said, to all the grape juice of France, and he, with his tumbler of cold grog before him, and the butt-end of a revolver, from which he never parted, sticking out of the breast of his navy blue coat, was sober enough. Dr. Cook, though very talkative, and in high spirits, seemed more addicted to waving his glass of creaming amber, and occasionally proposing toasts to the health of "Honest Old Abe," "Fighting Joe Hooker," and so forth, than to any deep potations. Mrs. Gregg, though she smiled, and prattled incessantly, scarcely so much as put the tall glass to her lips. The subalterns, however, were less abstemious, and the negro steward and his boy went busily to and fro, uncorking fresh bottles.

I went aft, and stood beside the taffrail, under shadow of the wheel-house, where the careful helmsman was guiding the steamer down stream. Three or four men, the watch, I suppose, were on deck, lying down among the spare sails and cordage, and apparently asleep, but I saw no officer. Indeed, I fancy that discipline had been somewhat relaxed for a time, in consequence of the symposium in the cabin, and of Captain Hopkins's unusual good humour, due to his anticipated profits on the cotton. I could hear the crew, noisy and merry, in the fore-castle, and I easily guessed that Mrs. Gregg's present of brandy was under discussion. The twanging of the fiddle and the sound of a negro song came at intervals from below, accompanied by clapping of hands and stamping of feet. Crouched under the bulwarks was a dark form, that of a woman with a gay Madras handkerchief tied round her head—Judy, Mrs. Gregg's negress, who had probably returned from carrying the brandy to the Mohawk's men, by her mistress's orders. A ray of moonlight fell on her face, and I noticed that her white teeth were glistening forth in a smile, perhaps of sympathy with the mirth indicated by the sounds that reached her.

I had drunk but two glasses of the wine that frothed so freely below, but my temples throbbed violently, and the blood that coursed through my veins was hot and fevered. I was glad,

therefore, to feel the cooler air that swept along the river, above whose brown waters a thin transparent mist, like a veil of bluish gauze, rose in irregular folds. The tall monotonous levée, built to keep out the stream from the rich plantations, could alone be seen to the eastward, but the western bank was fringed by the dark trees of the solemn forest, whence came at intervals the cry of night-birds, and the low whine of a wolf prowling for prey. The whooping of the great goat-sucker, with its strange note that fancy has rendered into the words "Willy—come—go," was answered by a hoarse whistling cry from the cayman among the reeds. As we floated on, I could see in the bright moonlight the hideous form of more than one alligator lying loglike on the surface. In the deep thickets the fire-flies and fire-beetles shone like a million tiny lamps. What was that? The hooting of an owl, twice repeated, and so near that I looked round, startled, but no bird was visible. However, a human form emerged from the shadow of the bulwarks, and the voice of Dr. Muly Cook said at my elbow,

"Pleasanter here, Mr. Harding, than down in that hot cabin." And he, too, looked out, as if musing on the tranquil beauty of the prospect. Gradually we got into conversation on indifferent topics, and I discovered that the store-keeper, of whose character I had formed no very exalted estimate, was both a better bred and a more thoughtful man than I had taken him to be. It was notable, too, that his nasal accent was no longer prominent, and in the gentle quiet personage who spoke with so much artistic perception of the effects of light and shade on the water's edge, and on the leafy grandeur of the southern forest, I hardly recognised the unscrupulous partisan of union at any price.

Dr. Cook was making some remarks on the wealth of parasitic vegetation, the bush vine, the Spanish moss, and the other creepers that hung in endless profusion from the giant trees on our right, when the low cry of the goat-sucker, coming to all appearance from the boat astern, made him start and break off in the midst of a sentence. Then with a muttered apology he left me, and returned to the cabin.

I remained alone. The mists were beginning to rise more thickly from the broad seething river, and the bright moonlight could scarcely pierce the rolling wreaths of fog. On board, I heard nothing but the sound of the steamer's bell, as the sentry struck it to mark the prescribed interval, but the fiddle was hushed, and no more din of joyous voices came from the fore-castle. The party in the cabin, too, had become silent, and I only heard the panting of the engine as the gunboat made her way along the bends of the endless river. We were now in a very lonely part of our course. Short of Baton Rouge and Port Hudson there were no places of note, and the levées lay stretching drearily for leagues and leagues without a sign of life being visible.

Suddenly I became aware of a low murmuring sound, like the hum of bees stirring in their

hive, and which seemed to come from the laden flat boats astern. The sound swelled and deepened, and seemed to approach, and I could distinguish the buzz of many voices speaking together in an under tone, and with this was mingled a faint splashing of water. The tow-ropes beside me grated on the planking of the deck, as it was violently jerked, and it was evident that something unusual was taking place. My first idea was that the barges had been suddenly dashed against snags or floating timber, or had sprung a leak, and I was in the act of stepping forward to give an alarm to the sailors of the watch, when a dark form seemed to rise, as it were, out of the mists of the river, and a man came scrambling with cat-like activity over the poop bulwarks beside me, and in a moment more I felt a bony hand clutch me by the throat, while a drawn bayonet was levelled at my breast. By the moonlight I could see, to my amazement, that this unexpected assailant was one of the coloured soldiers on duty in the cotton-boats.

"Ef you stir an eyelash, ef you speak above your breath, I'll drive the cold iron through your hump ribs, jest as I would through a calf bufler on the pararas," said the man, in a sice whisper, but in a voice that I knew could belong to no negro. I stood still and mute, of course, while a number of other figures came pouring over the taffrail, dropping from the rigging, and clambering over the sides of the vessel, but all this was so quickly and noiselessly done, that the portion of the Mohawk's crew on deck remained unconscious of what was going on.

"Who are you? Speak, you Yankee rascal!" hissed my captor, relaxing his grasp a little. Half choked and startled as I was, I still made shift to give a tolerably lucid account of my own identity, but before I had said a dozen words, a gaunt fellow in a red shirt and cavalry overalls came shouldering through the group, and put his bearded face close to mine.

"Whoop! boys, all he says is true enough. He's the British doctor we pressed into the service up on the Yazoo, and the Yankees tuk him. Loose him, Jem!"

The speaker's wish was complied with, but he had raised his voice incautiously, and the helmsman started and looked down from his perch in the wheel-house, shouting out, "Hilloa, there, what's afoot now? Watch ahoy! Treachery!"

Bang went a pistol by way of answer, and the steersman fell groaning, while a clamour of voices succeeded. The sentry started forward and levelled his musket at the intruders, but the piece missed fire, and the watch were in a moment overpowered, beaten to the deck, and bound hand and foot by the enemy, who far outnumbered them, since fresh assailants scrambled up at every moment from the cotton-boats to join in the fray. I was carried off my feet by the rush that ensued, and soon found myself in the cabin, spectator of a scene which, in my bewilderment, I could only partially comprehend.

Captain Hopkins, foaming with rage, was a

prisoner in the grasp of two men, one of whom wore the "butternut" uniform of the South-Western army of the Confederates, while the other was in the light blue garb of the coloured troops in Federal pay, though his woolly wig was awry, and the black stain had been partially rubbed from his white face in the scuffle that had ensued. The old seaman had fought hard; his clothes were torn, and he seemed unsubdued in soul, as he stood gasping for breath and glaring savagely at Dr. Muly Cook, who stood on the other side of the table, with a revolver in his hand that looked very like that which I had seen protruding from the captain's pocket. The marine officer, whose sword lay broken at his feet, was powerless in the clutch of two or three rough guerilla-looking figures, who were binding his hands with his own belt. The other officers were either sleeping with their heads upon the table, or stupidly surveying the scene with the vacant stare of hopeless intoxication. Mrs. Gregg, serene amid the confusion, wore a triumphant smile.

"You all-fired, double-dyed traitor! You are at the bottom of this! You snatched the pistol from me, when in a second more I'd have—Help, help! to arms, on deck there!" roared Captain Hopkins, as the trampling of feet and clash of steel overhead suggested to him the idea that the Mohawk's crew were rallying to his rescue. But he was disappointed, for the faces that looked down the cabin skylight, like those of the group crowding into the saloon below, were those of armed men wearing the hated uniform of the South. As for the storekeeper, he answered the captain's speech with great coolness.

"Spare your breath, sir," said he, with contemptuous politeness; "your sailors and marines will hardly answer to your call. Look at your officers. They have done justice, it would seem, to Mrs. Gregg's champagne, and the brandy that—"

"The liquor was drugged, as I'm a sinner, wine and brandy too!" exclaimed Hopkins, as the conviction flashed upon him; "but who are you, and the cotton, too, what on earth—"

"You'll never sell that cotton at fifty cents a pound in greenbacks, you won't," said a voice down the skylight. "Wagh! but I'm most stified, lying there under the cover, like a turkey in a coop. 'Twarn't a good time we had of it, major, I can tell you, pricking holes with our bowie-knives to get a breath of air. I've most forgot how to stir my arms, I have, but the spec warn't bad, after all."

The stratagem was now revealed. Dr. Cook, the convenient Federal storekeeper, who had appealed so successfully to the captain's love of dollars, was no other than Major Norris, C. S., one of the most adroit and daring cavalry officers of General Kirby Smith's army, and Mrs. Gregg was his wife. The whole scheme had been contrived for the purpose of capturing the Mohawk, which was well known to the

numerous and zealous agents of the South as being on her way to New Orleans, laden with valuable war material. The sham cotton bales were really nothing but enormous wicker work cages covered with packing cloth, and in which apertures had been made to admit air to the Confederate soldiers concealed within. A few of the adventurers had been disguised, some as boatmen, others as negro troops in Federal pay, the better to mislead suspicion, while Major Norris, at no slight risk of detection, which in this case would have involved a penalty of death, had undertaken to personate the part of an unscrupulous civilian in government employ, and had acted the character so well as to avert suspicion until the very moment when he had wrested the revolver from the astonished commander of the Mohawk. The papers exhibited, I need hardly say, were forgeries, while the greater part of the sailors and marines were found stupefied by the effects of the narcotic with which the wine and brandy had been drugged, and which Mrs. Norris, alias Gregg, had conveyed to the crew by the hands of her faithful coloured maid, Judy, who, as she boasted, hated the "bobolionists" as much as her mistress did. And Judy had rendered another service, having slyly seized an opportunity of withdrawing the copper cap from the sentry's musket, which certainly prevented bloodshed.

The affair was not a very tragic one, for the conquerors made a merciful use of their victory, and the steersman's wound, which was not mortal, was the only one inflicted in the hurry of the capture. The Mohawk, however, was pillaged and set on fire, after having been stripped of every scrap of iron or copper, down to her ring-bolts and rivets, and I believe the stores she contained were of great use to the Confederate army in the wild region west of the Mississippi. As for my own share in the transaction, the steamer's change of owners proved fortunate to me, since through the kind offices of Major Norris I was permitted to pursue my way, unmolested, through Western Louisiana and Texas, and, finally embarking at Matamoras, reached my destination in safety. Captain Hopkins and the rest were of course made prisoners of war, but I have no doubt have long since been exchanged. Of the further fortunes of the actors in this little drama I know nothing.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER XXI. THE SISTERS' "COUNCIL."

THAT dance was done. The orchestra came over hurriedly, at last released. Her lip was compressed, and her eye severe. Fermor got up, and, with a curious flush in his face, moved away. Hanbury, "hanging about" undecidedly for a time, seemed to draw near in gradually narrowing circles, and finally stood before Violet with a piteous injured look. He found comfort in the sudden change in her manner. She was excited; talked and smiled. She was eager to dance, and accepted when he proposed it. Her manner, however, was "distracted," and though she answered him a little at random, he accepted her smiles in place of a more direct answer. Her sister, delighted, again volunteered to step into the orchestra, and, looking with beaming face over the little cottage piano, poured forth a mad tantalising galop, that challenged every foot in the room. It was only "a carpet dance;" but presently the Miss Campbells, each armed with a military boy, were hurrying round, their dresses sweeping the faces of older dames who were seated. Major Carter looked on in delight. "'Pon my word," he said, "this is surprising; quite a gay little rout! Come on me by surprise!"

Fermor's heart was beating as he looked on. "Won't do," said Captain Thersites, passing him. "Poor Fermor! Look over there."

Fermor looked after him with triumph and contempt. "Fool to the last!" he thought. "This will crush him for ever." And for many minutes he enjoyed the thought.

At one o'clock came in a few emaciated ices, and some phials of coloured sugar and water—"sorbetts" on the French plan. Abundance, however, was supplied, or the poverty of material covered by the triumph of the entry, which was in all the clatter of ice-spoons and the jingling of innumerable glasses. With which was mixed up the voice of Major Carter, chanting an anthem: "Take an ice! do take an ice. Let me get you a sorbet. Paris over again. I am afraid I am a Frenchman. Do have an ice, &c."

It was a very happy little evening; such good humour on all sides. Not till nearly two did they go away.

Hanbury drifted after the Manuels down stairs out to their carriage, like a heavy beam of wood. Rude joy was on his broad honest face, yet he was a little doubtful and mystified. As they went down, the elder girl had just opportunity to whisper with delightful anticipation, "Well? all settled, I know." To whom John answered as secretly and as ecstatically, "When we get home." And, while Hanbury was getting her cloak, Miss Manuel turned to her brother, and, in the same delighted whisper, told him, "All settled. Poor good John. How happy he is."

Afterwards, there was a sort of hurried conclave sitting in the eldest Miss Manuel's room—a wild hurried meeting. The mother, Mrs. Manuel, was called in to listen. "I knew it," said the younger girl, rapturously. "I told you all so, in spite of all you said, and all you prophesied. Now has he not redeemed himself?" and she looked round on them all, from one to the other, very triumphantly. Her eyes were glistening, her cheeks glowing; she was curiously excited, as, indeed, a very small occasion would excite. She was the heroine of the moment. Her face seemed to play with repeated flashes of light. She was like a child in her joy, and she walked up and down before them, in little quick short marches. The others looked on her with pride, and yet with sadness.

"Yes, dear," said her sister, "you were right—and will be very happy—but the only thing is, I am thinking—"

The younger girl stopped her. "Now for the difficulties," she said, smiling, "you dear, wise, old-fashioned Pauline. You are going to give me advice. I know you are."

"No, indeed," said the other; "but I am thinking—and I cannot help thinking—of poor, poor John. What is to be done with him?"

Violet's eyes were suddenly cast upon the ground. For a few moments there was silence.

"I have thought of him," she said, "and, indeed, I am very sorry. He is so good, so kind, and so generous. But I could not help it, you know, dearest Pauline, I could not. I did not know my own mind, and thought I liked him."

Her brother, who had come in, was now standing in the doorway.

"There is the misfortune," he said, gravely.

"How will that console him? Such a brave, honest, faithful man. Ah, Violet, you don't know what you are doing!"

"He is, indeed," said the young girl, eagerly, and in some confusion; "and he has been so good to me! And I have behaved very cruelly. But I did not mean it, and I am sure—I know—he has such a sensible, manly heart—after a little time he will——"

"Ah! exactly," said her brother, excitedly; "it is these sensible manly hearts that feel these things. No, no; I know him by this time. This will spoil some good years of his life. This is not a mere scrape or scratch. Poor Hanbury!"

"I am very unfortunate! I am very miserable!" she said, looking from one to the other in great distress. "I never thought—I never meant it; indeed, I did not;" and her soft round eyes began to grow dim with coming tears.

The elder girl, who, up to this moment, had been supporting all that her brother had been saying, now suddenly deserted him, and running to her sister, put her arms about her.

"No, no," she said; "things will turn out much better. Poor John is sensible, as you say, and will suffer a little at first, like all men. He is strong. Come, darling, don't think of him. We shall see him in the morning, and set it all right. After all, the point is that you are to be happy—and you *are* to be happy."

The brother, still gloomy, sighed. "Ah! that is the point," he said, dejectedly; "we know so little of *this* man."

The elder girl had made her protest, as a duty. She now cast away her grim grandmother's cloak and hood and crooked stick. Shutting her eyes, she got rid of the gravities of judgment and sage counsel; and the two talked the new engagement over when they were going to bed—rapturously, as sisters do, in council. Alone together, letting their hair fall, and undressing by slow lingering stages, everything was gold and colour: the richest gold and the richest colour. The future was bathed in the glowing Turner tints—lakes and crimsons—but neither of them dreamed for a moment of their being mere opera skies, and ingenious effects of the electric light. The little scene at Major Carter's party was acted all over again, and over again after that, with pre-Raphaelite detail.

Violet had soon swept away any momentary clouds. She was walking up and down, full of enthusiasm, and telling all to her sister with charming confidence. "From the first day he spoke to us, you recollect, dear, out near the gate, I somehow felt, I can't describe it, a sort of sensation that he was to be—something to me. It came on me like a flash. There was something in his eyes, and you recollect how he came to me straight—I understood him—and he almost told me," she added, shyly, "he had much the same feeling about me."

"And you never told me," said her sister, "to whom you tell everything, or say you tell everything, you quiet, shy child, whom I thought so

innocent. I suppose you were afraid about poor John."

"Ah, yes," said Violet, dropping her eyes; "you were all such friends of his."

"And I suppose," said her sister, "it was on the same day poor John's fate was sealed."

"Why, I am afraid so," said Violet, still looking down. "And, O! Pauline, dear, it was the most curious thing in the world. For I did like him so, and admire him up to that day, I did, indeed. And he really seemed quite handsome until——"

"Until the other came," said Pauline. "Well, you won't be angry, but, somehow, if I were to compare the two, in point of looks——"

"No, no!" said Violet, with childlike eagerness, "indeed he's not. There's something so refined, and so calm and quiet about him, and so intellectual."

"Say perfect at once, darling," said her sister, kissing her.

"Ah, that is the thing," said the other, sighing. "What will he say when he finds out how much below him I am in knowledge. Indeed, I told him as much. But he has promised," she said, brightening, "to teach me himself, and to 'form my mind,' as he says."

"Your poor little mind!" said her sister. And presently they were both asleep.

Not until he got to his own room that night, when the footlights were out, and the linen covers put round the boxes, did Fermor awake. Daylight, grey and cold, mixing oddly with his lamp, was coming in at his window. He felt a sort of guilty sensation that he had taken some fatal step, and could not turn back.

He turned, almost shivering, from himself. "I must have been mad," he said, and half groaned. After every step of any decided sort this indecision comes. It rises from the feeling that it is impossible to go back. Perhaps this acts on the vanity, as being a curtailment of the will, an interference in one direction at least with the power of doing as one might please. Fermor sat long in that mixed light, gazing a little stupidly at his watch and guard-chain. "How could I have been so hasty," he said. "I might have waited a little."

Then he thought of his mother at Nice, Lady Laura Fermor, a cold woman of fashion, of reduced means. Perhaps this was the spectre that was threatening him. And he had to reassure himself with his Spanish Castle, setting that Miss Manuel walking through the grounds in shadow and in rich light; but somehow his building seemed of lath and canvas.

However, self-confidence came to help him. "A good sensible letter," he said ("one of my good sensible letters," was the special shape of the thought), "will set the thing in its proper light before her. After all, a man can't go on in this unprofitable way, neither good nor useful to himself, nor to others. I should be ashamed to descend into the grave after such a selfish career. No, she is charming! such devotion, such pretty devotion, I have never seen." And the recollection of it, with his own excellent playing

all through it, came back on him more acceptably. With an eagerness not unnatural (just as though he would have the satisfaction of settling the whole affair before he went to bed, and get it off his mind), he got out his ink and crested and initialed paper, and actually wrote the "good sensible letter" to his mother. It could go by the morning's mail, and he would have an answer signifying its effect within a week.

CHAPTER XXII. FERMOR'S NEW CHARACTER.

THE sensation produced in the little colony when the news got abroad, which it did very soon, was something astonishing. It was passed from hand to hand like a fire-bucket at a conflagration. There were those who had never thought it, and those who had always thought it; those who believed it from the beginning, and those who now *could* not believe it, with a smaller and more select class whom it affected in rather an overwhelming way, falling on them "like a thunderbolt." It was taken with buns and ices at noonday at the little pastrycook's of the colony; it was served after the fish and soup at the festivals of the colony. Finally, it became as steel and bark, and invigorated the jaded systems of the social gossips.

Fermor detested undue publicity of this sort, and to have any plans of his special life made free with in the common speech, was a gross liberty. He froze over all congratulations, and congealed them before they had time to flow from the speaker's mouth. It was wonderful when he looked back on the singular and sudden step he had taken—how one of his character could have carried himself steadily through. But, as he said to himself pretty often, the "truly balanced mind" is never surprised, suffering no starts or shocks. Everything is foreseen, and there everything falls into the tranquil daily current. Besides, he had within him an extraordinary amount of what he took for resolution, but which, when the tests and acids came to be applied by a moral chemist, sank to the bottom, resolved into a powder composed of vanity and a little obstinacy. The vanity could not allow him to think he *could* have made a mistake.

He had now, too, his melodramatic dress on, and for a few days the whole sensation of the situation became a sort of stimulating food for him. He felt that he could enjoy the luxury of being "generous," and thought with quite a suffusion of noble feelings of the case of John Hanbury. His worsting of that gentleman, and the overthrow of other enemies, were indeed complacent thoughts he was never weary of entertaining. One of the first things he did was to call on John Hanbury, and, as he walked to the house, he had his hand out, morally, all the way.

Hanbury was at his desk, and had been writing, but his face was covered up by his hands, and when he looked up, Fermor was almost startled by the plain marks of suffering

and anxiety. In all projecting places it had been sharpened, and all colour had passed away.

Hanbury received him with a violent flush, and a paleness as violent. "To what am I indebted—" he was beginning, with a clumsy attempt at cold dignity, which amused Fermor.

"Come, come!" said the latter, putting out his physical hand this time, just as he had rehearsed it, "let us be plain and aboveboard with one another. I am sorry about the whole business, for your sake, indeed I am. But you must consider what I am—merely a passive instrument."

The other took his hand doubtfully. "I did not expect it—I scarcely expected it of you, Fermor," he said, mournfully. "I would not have behaved so to another man."

"Poor childish boy," thought Fermor, pityingly, yet singularly gratified with himself, "how absurdly he feels it, or *shows* that he feels it." Fermor himself, in a similar case, would have let the fox under his uniform eat his heart out; at least so he thought. "Come, come!" said Fermor, "you will be reasonable, I know. You will bear it in a manly way, I am sure, when you think of it coolly."

"Ah!" said the other, bitterly, "with some that comes very natural. There *are* people who think of everything coolly; I can't; I wish to God I could; I would not be as—as miserable as I am." He sat down again at his desk, and put up his hands. "It was a new life to me," he went on, in a sort of dismal monotone. "It was like a change to heaven—I mean, all these last few months. I never, never was so happy! And I firmly believe *she* was as happy, and liked me—for a time, at least—until—until—Ah!" he continued, appealing piteously to Fermor, "why did you do it? How could you amuse yourself with such heartless sport? You will have had things of this sort over and over again; with me it happens only once. It is a whole life, and now that you have taken away life from me, what is left to me? I tell you, Fermor—" he was growing vehement, but he stopped himself. "Though, after all, I suppose *you* are not so much to blame."

"Now," said Fermor, laying his hand on his arm, "if you would listen to me for a moment, I think I could put the matter in such a reasonable light, that—"

"I know, I know," said Hanbury, dismally. "I don't want reason, it is a poor comfort to me. I suppose it is all right—it *was* to be, and so it came to be. Of course she has her free will, and could change her mind if she pleased. It would be very hard if she couldn't."

"Now, that is a rational way to take it," said Fermor, "and if I could speak of myself as a third person—only it is a fittle delicate, you will admit—you see, as I said before, I was really passive in the business. And you will pardon me, I think, if I remind you that at our last meeting you really almost threw down the glove. You recollect? Now, when a man's pride is appealed to, and he is put upon his mettle—you see? I really don't know but that if you had appealed

to me as you did now—that is, put the thing in the present forcible light—”

“O, I know,” groaned Hanbury. “I am sure of it. But I am so awkward, and clumsy, and stupid, I always do something heavy and foolish. And now,” he continued, with a doleful smile, “the only thing left for me is to bear it as best I can, and go off to the sheep-walks again. I am sure to make no blunders there: Good-by.”

Fermor went away full of real pity and compassion for this “honest poor soul,” who in so confiding a way exhibited his foolish heart to all comers. “He will hawk his sorrows all over the place,” thought Fermor. “Perhaps it will be the best thing that could happen to him, if he only knew how to get profit out of his misfortune. But he does not. If I were in his place, it would be a whole fortune to me.” Even as it turned out, it *was* a whole fortune to him, for Hanbury’s acute sufferings seemed to make his victory more precious.

“It is curious,” he thought, as he came away, “how everything falls into the groove I lay out for it.” Then he began to think how, by practice and skill, this mysterious faculty of his would grow to a wonderful perfection, and lead him into the foremost ranks—parliamentary and ministerial, perhaps—with very different elements to deal with than Hanbury.

But it was not until he first saw Thersites Showers in full mess council, when the chiefs met at dinner, that he reaped all the profit of the step he had taken. When Fermor came in among them they looked at each other shyly, at him with reverence. They were boys after all, and they felt their boyhood. Here was their master. He who had indifferently tolerated all their childish splashing in the water, their making mud-pies, and was all the time calmly plotting this brilliant coup de théâtre. They all seemed to feel their littleness in his presence. He walked in like a hero, and was very gracious to them. But his real superiority lay in the defeat of Showers. Just as the regiment had its adjutant and messman, and even a brains carrier or two, so Showers was kept in pay as their sarcastic sharpshooter. In a lull, or in a critical moment, he was ordered to the front, like the comic-song singer among the privates on a march. Now he seemed to be cashiered. He had broken down, and was held in contempt.

“Someway,” said Fermor, after the mess dinner, in the great arm-chair, and with his hands in his pockets, looking down the length of his legs, as it were, along a level, “you see I know myself thoroughly, and what I can do. Anything I lay myself out for seriously I can bring about in the long run. I don’t,” continued Fermor, modestly looking round on them all, “set up to do more than other men, but, you see, I make more of my materials. Another thing,” he continued, “when I make up my mind to a thing, I always have it done at once. Every second of dawdling over a serious step is diminishing its value. It is like,” continued he, smiling at some pleasant little fancies that were coming into his mind,

“like, say, so much out of the proceeds of a bill, commission, brokerage, and that sort of thing.” And in this fashion Captain Fermor lectured away for a long time to a very serious and attentive congregation. He came home very well satisfied with himself, in a cloud of will-o’-the-wisp conviction that he *had* really carried off a prize, defeated innumerable competitors, and was on a sort of envied table-land looking down on all, and regarded with a wistful admiration.

CHAPTER XXIII. THE FERMOR FAMILY.

LADY LAURA FERMOR, fourth daughter of a late Earl of Hungerford, was well recollected by many gentlemen with grey whiskers as Lady Laura Stonechewer. Tall, almost plain, with a gauntness about her shoulders, kept in confinement by secret power below, from which they seemed struggling to escape by sudden contortions. Yet she had “style” and “tone,” and as she performed her scenes in the circle with daring, and went round and round in the social circus with rapidity, she came to be admired. Like the ugly Mr. Wilkes, she was but a few seconds behind the loveliest; and some extra exertion and hard riding always brought her to the front.

She had been long in the service. For years she had been in the drawing-rooms, and met indifferent sport. At last, a mild country gentleman—Thornton Fermor, Esq., of the Holyoakes—looking down one evening, saw her in her gauze and spangles dashing by, almost covering him in a cloud of the sawdust. He was delighted with her “dash” and action. The shoulders were, luckily, not insubordinate. Lady Laura Stonechewer became Lady Laura Fermor, and retired down to the Holyoakes, where the surrounding gentry delighted in sending notes, requesting the pleasure of “Mr. Fermor’s and Lady Laura Fermor’s company at dinner,” and positively rang them joyfully together in concert, as though they had been a peal of church bells.

In due time they began to contribute to the *Heraldic Koran*; and the mild Thornton “by her had issue:”

1. Charles Hungerford;
2. Alicia Mary;
3. Blanche; and
4. Laura.

Charles Hungerford grew up, became a fashionable child and boy, never showed the least taste for ostler or kitchen society, took no interest in stable, ostler, or kitchen topics, and, in the lower ranks, was considered a cold, stuck up lad, with “no manners.” To him his mother was an indefatigable missionary, preaching the gospel of good society, and the companionship of genteel confessors. “However high you are,” she was always saying to him, “look a little higher, and you will be sure, if you do not advance, to keep your place. Everything has a tendency to slide down.” So with dress and appearance. The best clothes, the dearest and best tailor, these were cheaper in the end than the cheapest and meanest, as they

returned all outlay in the respect and consideration they brought with them—obtaining, as it were, free tickets to all social exhibitions. So with select companions and selecter tastes; and Charles Hungerford became an eager catechumen in this faith, and almost a raging little fanatic.

Thornton Fermor, Esq., had only a genteel patrimony, and as Alicia Mary, Blanche, and Laura junior, as well as Charles Hungerford, were encouraged in the same virtues, their combined outlay became a serious total. Charles Hungerford was sent, not so much to a fashionable school, as to a fashionable set *at* the fashionable school. Till he was twenty he sat in a private box everywhere. So with Alicia Mary, and Blanche, and Laura junior, who, before they had passed through a beginning, or even a middle stage, were put to a “finishing school,” where they were drilled and smoothed and burnished up to an exquisite smoothness. Lady Laura, taking stock of her labours and good deeds, often said that she had at least given them the best education “that money could procure,” which really meant no more than that they had been “well grounded” in the best juvenile society that could be found. She herself was a wonderful captain and she-lanzknecht, a drawing-room *Frei Ritter*, and with her curious gauntness and pale mustard complexion, seemed not to care either for eating or drinking, or, above all, for sleep. What she found in the hard, hopeless sort of life she lived, and which she called “gaiety,” would be difficult to discover.

Thornton Fermor was a sort of quiet woman in a man's dress, and received orders from her. She had settled that Charles Hungerford, who had been at Oxford studying young Lord Chester and Sir Victor Banbury, and other young gentlemen of quality, should be “put” into a Guards' regiment, when Thornton Fermor glided away out of the world—just as he used to glide away of an evening out of his home racket to a tranquil club—but leaving his affairs, as friends told each other, “in sad confusion.” This brought about a lull in the racket. A huddled hasty settlement of things was effected. Charley Fermor had to “go” into a corps where there were no youths of quality, but only the sons of thriving merchants; where the senior captain was the second child of the well-known Manchester horse repositée; where the adjutant was understood to take largely under the will of an eminent wedding pastrycook; and where some of the junior ensigns bore names that awkwardly and pointedly suggested brewing, cotton-spinning, and colonial produce.

Finally, Alicia, showing symptoms of “weakness of the chest,” Lady Laura Fermor broke up her camp, loaded her baggage-carts, and marched for Nice; whence very soon was written home news of “Alicia's chest being restored.”

It was hard not to admire the boldness, the energy, the unflagging spirit, of this untiring woman. If she had ever thought of the unim-

portant little matter of making a soul, or could have spared any time for *that* kind of *délasement*, she would have held a high spiritual place. She worked out a fashionable salvation with infinite mortification of the flesh, and all manner of painful austerities in the narrow and thorny paths of social pleasures. Poor soul! Did she ever smile when she heard the select preacher at the select church she attended, declaiming against what he called the “alluring seductions” of the world?

At her time of life, a lawyer, a merchant, a soldier, who had seen such service as she had seen, would think of honourable retirement. The soldier, spent and battered, might honourably retire to his Chelsea or his Invalides; she was entitled to her pension, her seat in the sun, and, figuratively, her tranquil pipe. She might gossip with other veteran dowagers, also in honourable “retreat.” But this undaunted woman was only thinking of new fields and new campaigns. She found strength, and spirit, and courage, and endurance, for the new venture: but where she got them it would be hard to say.

Yet she worked under grave discouragement. Alicia Mary, Blanche, and Laura, with remarkable promise as children, did not answer early expectation. In all of them there was a tendency to inherited gauntness. In all of them there was a tendency to a plebeian broadness of features often associated with scrubbing of door-steps, and attendance on many lodgers. Late bivouacking and exposure had told roughly on Alicia Mary and her sisters. Their mother did what she could with them—almost tried to reconstruct them altogether. She might dress them with costliness and the best taste, of which she had abundance, and she might turn on perfect conduits of porter and port and “nourishing” stimulants; she might push and twist them untiringly, wearily drilling them: it would not do, and could not be done. Could she fill in the hollow gaps in their necks and shoulders, and pare off those sharpnesses which projected like chimney-piece corners, she would have had more than mortal skill. No wonder that Captain Singleman, in his coarse way, said of the young ladies they were a “hopeless lot.”

Still she persevered, and by never relaxing her efforts, by ceaseless training, by dressing them well, by talking of them as superiors, and filling the air round them as they marched with the sound of the Stonehewers and other family titles, like Turkish music, and, above all, by hurrying up when she saw them broken, and making them form square, she managed to secure for them a place and a sort of false prestige. Thus they were always led out to the dance, and never looked on sadly at the whirling measure, like deserted drawing-room Calypsos.

At Nice, things looked brighter. There was what her ladyship called an opening—a destitution in the matter of good serviceable girls. Un-sound chests, “affected” lungs, and consumption, went out to parties, and, with flushed cheeks, were ready to stand up and go through the

dance with all comers. The delicacy of Alicia Mary's chest was quite a different sort of thing. In this narrow little paddock "Lady Laura Fermor" was said to be quite an addition. She at once had the freedom of every drawing-room presented to her. She took, almost as a matter of right, the fowling over those moors.

Afar off her wary eyes had already marked down something stirring in the underwood. She came, not unprovided with reliable information. She knew of some young and noble chests that were "threatened," and, as she had anticipated, found young Gulliver and Lord Spandril, yet younger and more tender in years, already in this happy sanatorium. Those youths idolised the valse and the wilder galop, and Alicia Mary and Blanche ambled round in those measures with singular grace and agility.

It was a surprise to meet these young men so far away, in one of the little narrow chambers where the Nice festivals were given. A few of the colony—the Welbore Cravens, the Browns, the Selwyns, and a delightful French family, the Marquis la Motte-Terray, whom all the select English knew—"saw each other" a good deal, and gave each other reciprocal dances.

"Ah! that winter we spent at Nice!" said Major Brown, a couple of years later. "You remember, Fanny? The nice little parties we gave to each other. No scandalous waste in suppers, and music, and tumbling the house out of windows, as we do in this absurd country. You stuck a few wax candles about, and squeezed a dozen of lemons, and the thing was done. We went from one house to another. 'Sir, you have me to-night, and I have you to-morrow night.' The prettiest girls came to us, and how they enjoyed themselves. You recollect that young La Motte-What's-his-name, when he got up the cotillon at our house?"

This style of entertainment suited Lady Laura Fermor's taste exactly. She called it "rational enjoyment," and she carried out the total abstinence principle even further than her neighbours. As conquerors make war support war, so she made dances support dances, and guests support guests. She artfully went round "drawing the line," exposing plaintively unworthy intrigues that had been set on foot to break into her select pleasure-grounds, and actually succeeded in setting an artificial value on her little cheap "drums." People struggled to get admission to those little hot rooms, and Alicia Mary, Blanche, and Laura junior, were contended for with animation. As they drifted of a night into one of these festive cabins, with their indomitable parent in the front of the little procession, young Gulliver and the younger Spandril came swooping down on them, eager to secure them, both showing signs of excessive heat. In those youths, indeed, they exercised a sort of proprietorship: with them they exchanged glances of intelligence and significant words. At their humorous sallies—and sometimes they gambolled before them in the Ethiopian manner—the sisters Fermor were convulsed; their sense of the humour of the exhibition contend-

ing with an attempt at grave reproof. Lady Laura, true and faithful night after night, got into her uniform and went on duty in the trenches, and, all through wet and exposure, exhaustion and fatigue, never once failed; never *would* fail unto the end; and when her hour came, would surely be found at her post, apparently sleeping, having at last found rest, and grasping her fan as it might be her firelock.

Later on she was telling friends how she was expecting her relative, Sir Hopkins Pocock, C.B., late governor of certain colonies—Prince Rupert's Island it might have been—a gentleman whose profession was Governing, and who was now moving round pleasantly from one Governing station to the other. He was not unknown, for it was he who, after long and harassing boundary wars, had concluded the famous treaty with the Waipiti tribe. Before this diplomatic triumph he had been in the Indies, and was said to have collected enormous wealth. Waiting now till he should begin Governing again—and there was to be a vacancy in a few months—he was coming to Nice for some trifling repairs.

CHAPTER XXIV. A DIPLOMATIST.

LADY LAURA had discounted him in advance. At languid little teas, at the furious Dervish dances of Major Brown, she menaced them with her relative, flourished him in the air, brought him down on them at intervals like the lash of a whip. Finally, at one of the little parties specially organised for the purpose, she discharged him among them as if he were a cartridge. As may be conceived, the union of two such first-class powers was irresistible, and seriously disturbed the balance of power in the colony.

On which, select persons were taken into custody, as it were, and led off to be introduced to "my relative," Sir Hopkins Pocock, and found themselves bowing before an exceedingly tight and clean-made little man, whose clothes were dapper and clean-made too, and rather spare as to their material, so as to give no undue advantage to diplomatists on the other side. He had a round pink head, pierced for two small twinkling eyes; cheeks, lips, chin, and throat, shaven away right and left, as if, again, to leave nothing that could afford a ready purchase to the opposing diplomatist. He had a thin layer of iron-grey hair on his head; but if tonsures were at all in fashion, he would have seized on the least pretext to have laid out his head in a sort of pond or ornamental water of baldness. Failing this, he was obliged to content himself with a general air of perkiness, and succeeded in easily throwing an air of perk into his nose, into his chin, and with more difficulty into the front portion of his lips, which he brought to regular points.

He had a marvellous fluency, and five minutes after the company had assembled, his talking was trickling smoothly over two or three gentlemen on the rug, like oil from the thin spout of an engine-driver's can. There was no interrup-

tion in the rich stream; and, with strictest impartiality, he turned the mouth of his conversational can from one to the other, so that all might have their share. He illustrated his stream with perks, and succeeded in producing a general perk in his chest and body, and put himself through all the gentle spasms of a Robin. Such an opportunity being not likely to recur, they had got him on the state of Europe, and on the schemes of designing powers, and the conversational oil was flowing very freely indeed.

He would illustrate it, he said, by a matter that came within his own experience (oil-can to Major Brown) when he was busy concluding that treaty, which they might have heard of, with the Waipiti tribe. He had had the honour of finally determining the great boundary question (oil suddenly directed on Mr. Welbore Craven). Mind, he did not accept the foolish stories then current about the Waipiti being worked by other parties who were pulling the wires. Some pointed to the Omai country; some, to beyond the hills. It would not be betraying a state secret to say, now that the thing is past and gone, that Harrington, Minister for Waste Lands and Marshes, held this strongly in council; so did Bond, afterwards premier (went out on the squatter question). But he (turning the oil with a jerk on to Brown) simply said, Wait—simply wait. No groping in the dark. And what was his principle? People at home, and people abroad, and people generally, still wondered what was the secret instrument he had used in composing these Waipiti troubles. Other governments and other governors had tried before him, and—no discredit to them—had failed. And why? Simply because they ignored this obvious principle: “Never *seem* to want what you want.” There was the whole of it. The world was welcome to know it. (This spoken with a look as if he were distributing five-pound notes all round.) The result was, he believed, pretty well known at home and abroad. Upon his word, that was the whole secret history of the transaction. He was glad it should be known. (General sprinkle of oil over all, as from the rose of a watering-pot.)

The constituents of the group were changed one by one, as a factory-girl changes her spindles, but the conversation trickled on. Sir Hopkins marked its time with jerks and little spasms, gesticulating with those useful points of his nose, his lips, and his chin. Lady Laura looked on with pride, brought up young Gulliver and younger Lord Spandril, most unsuitable objects, but who were at once oiled abundantly.

In this retirement, and waiting a promised vacancy in one of the Indian provinces, Sir Hopkins Pocock received unusual local honours. The maire and syndics called on him: he walked in a diplomatic cloud, and aired the Waipiti question innumerable times. He kept his little diplomatic tools from rusting by practice in drawing-rooms and other places, putting on his government-house manner as if it were his uniform, and laying his head on one side in the

Robin attitude, when any one was bold enough to utter a long sentence—as who should say, “*I’m* looking over the wall at you. I can see you.”

He often talked with Lady Laura over her son Charles. He had had a sort of liking for Charles when a boy, really surprising in one into whose system a bundle of despatches had got introduced instead of a heart. He had wished that he should be put to diplomacy, but at that time he had not made his Indian money, and his wishes naturally did not carry the weight with them they now did. Lady Laura often bitterly bewailed it to him. “We should have made an attaché of him, indeed we should,” she said, penitently. “But I must say we never knew—poor Thornton and I—that you so wished it.”

The diplomatist rubbed his fingers gleefully, perked his head on one side as if he were going to pick up caraway-seeds, and said:

“You were not wanted to know, my dear Laura; there was my policy, you see. One of my little secrets has been *never seem* to want what you *do* want. Do you understand?”

Lady Laura was confounded at the discovery of this powerful engine; but she did not remark to him that it had broken down in that particular instance.

“However,” continued he, “we shall get him a better profession—marry him off, when I am at government-house, in my Indian district. He shall come with me as secretary, aide-de-camp, or something of that sort. We shall get him a rajah’s daughter—a nabob’s child—with half a million of rupees. Leave it to me.”

Sir Hopkins came back to that subject often, and planned it minutely. Lady Laura welcomed it with delight, for Sir Hopkins had been too hopelessly abandoned to diplomacy to marry, and this really looked like adoption. She had often thought of her son’s offering himself for marriage in the City, only that such a scheme, coming from her, would be hopeless. In the hands of a trained diplomatist it was different.

Meanwhile, the refitting was going on, and the diplomatist was getting on new sheathing and copper fastening, and being fresh riveted all through. Every day he sent away many letters, which he found a pleasure in ingeniously shaping as much like despatches as possible. He said he was “feeling his way,” and, judging from the many times he wrote, the feeling must have been on a very extensive scale, and the way of enormous length.

It was near the end of the season. The brave enduring mother had led her fair squad on, again and again, to the front, and, though unable to break the enemy’s line, had never lost courage. Soon the daylight would be gone, and there would be no light left to fight by. To do *them* justice, they too did not falter, but came on again and again, being so well led. Yet it seemed idle. The two youths had all the training of old Machiavellians. They were almost affectionate in their bearing, these young traitors. They

gambolled about the premises like young dogs—ate in a friendly way off the family board at dinner and supper-time. They suffered themselves to be led about on brotherly terms. And yet one day young Gulliver, helping himself as he spoke to the family sherry, announced gaily to the girls a pleasant bit of news, at which they should all rejoice.

"Do you know," he said, "we're to be off in a few days. The governor's relented at last, and I am so glad. Spandril's been dying to go this age, and so have I. I can tell you, we're going to have a jolly time of it now. Do you know, we have been getting greatly bored here."

A ghastly smile showed the two girls' appreciation of the news. But Lady Laura had not forgotten to train their muscles as she had all other points about them.

"How pleasant!" they said.

"Ain't it jolly?" said the youth. "I am counting the hours till we get off. Spandril's got an invitation to a house in Ireland swarming with pretty girls—on draught—ha! ha!—and he's to take me! Jolly!"

The mother received the news of how the labour of months had been swept away—like an embankment by a violent storm—even without a twitch in her face.

"It was pleasant," she said, "getting away at this time. And when did they go? We would all miss them so." No one could have guessed the stab which this true Spartan felt at her heart.

For the first time, Lady Laura had begun to feel a sense of hopelessness, coupled with the idea that she was only rolling rocks up hills like a fashionable Syspluss. Latterly, her mind had begun to travel over in the direction of her son Charles. She talked a good deal with the diplomatist on his schemes. "Leave it to me," said that wily negotiator. "I should like nothing better. I shall manage. But we must have no forcing it on, no eagerness. Old Governor Baines, tried that with the Waipiti tribe, and we all know how it ended. He put on his blue and gold, and went down to them with a flourish. I said how it would be when I heard it. No, no, my good Laura, leave it to me."

"But couldn't we get him over here?" said Laura, anxiously. "At such a distance."

"Now, do leave it to me," said Sir Hopkins; and for the present it was left to him.

The idea, however, took violent hold of Lady Laura Fermor. She began to turn from the three "hopeless and helpless" daughters, whom no labour, or pains, or proppings, or "shoring up," could do anything for. She often thought, that if she herself had had but a quarter of such advantages, what splendid results would have been achieved. As it was, she had had to work for herself.

She began to feel a contempt for those clumsy girls, for their gauntness, and stupidity, and would, perhaps, have been glad to have exposed them—on a mountain, did that custom obtain among us.

Yet they went through the old routine. They dressed and decorated themselves, and set out for the shows, and their faithful officer, with her old "hault courage," went with them.

On one of these occasions, the Mairo or Hôtel de Ville was giving an entertainment—a high festival that had been talked of for some weeks in advance. New ladies' uniforms had been ordered, and new flowers, and even new ladies' faces. The busy clink of armourers was heard on all sides. The girls, rallying a little, took on many hands, and laboured earnestly. Hope was the last of the virtues that was to flutter away from the little chambers in the Ponchettes, and there was an invalid baronet, and an honourable planet or two, whose place in the social firmament had been ascertained with all but certainty, whose right ascension had been calculated, and who might be looked for on the horizon at any moment. Majors, too, were made out in the welkin. These scraps of astronomical science inspired their fainting hearts. The darkest hour is that before the day.

THE POOR OF PARIS.

WHAT Paris does for the poor, the old and the deserted, how its workmen work, how they talk, read, and amuse themselves, and in what way they unite for mutual help, Mr. Blanchard Jerrold tells, from recent local research of his own, very thoroughly and well in a book called the Children of Lutetia. They have been studied by French government officials, and by independent writers after the French manner, but what an Englishman sees with his own eyes in his own different way, and tells to his countrymen, is worth reading on both sides of the channel. Witness the following account of the gist of Mr. Jerrold's book.

For the care of the sick and poor of Paris, the Hôtel-Dieu had existed since the reign of Louis le Debonnaire, and was endowed richly with wealth and privileges, when the Great Bureau of the Poor, founded in the year fifteen hundred and thirty-five, began to divide patronage with it. Afterwards, in sixteen fifty-six, the Hôpital Général was founded, based on general subscriptions, to relieve the Bureau from the pressure of beggars and vagabonds who flocked to it from all parts. This hospital soon became the most important charitable institution in France. Seven years after its establishment in a year of famine, it had an income of more than thirty-one thousand pounds. Under Louis the Fifteenth and Sixteenth it acquired new privileges, and among them the right to lend money to the poor on pawn. When the Revolution broke out, this hospital had an income of about a hundred and seventy thousand pounds, while the income of all the Paris hospitals and asylums was estimated at three hundred and twenty thousand, and was probably more. By the action of the revolutionary government, the income of the poor

throughout France was diminished three-fifths, but the Consulate restored to them their rights, and secured them a large capital for the losses they had suffered. Count Frochot was appointed to draw up a project for the complete government of the nineteen hospitals and refuges of Paris; and that report is the basis of the present administration of those charities. They were placed under one administration in the first year of the present century.

The Minister of the Interior now appoints, on the recommendation of the Prefect of the Seine, a director in chief of the administration of public charity. The gentleman now holding this office is M. Husson, who states in his last report that the patrimony of the poor is no longer increased as it used to be by private bequests, so that the administrators are compelled to ask, year by year, for larger subventions. The budget of Paris charities shows now an annual expenditure of about a million in English money, of which little more than a tenth part is provided by endowment. There are taxes for the good of the poor on admissions to theatres, on sale of graves, and so forth, the deficiency being at last made up by a municipal subvention of some three hundred and sixty thousand pounds.

The central and chief offices of the public charity of Paris are on the Quai Pelletier, in the Avenue Victoria. It has four divisions and eight departments. The four divisions in which more than a hundred people are employed, are that of the secretaries; that of finance; that which has charge of the hospitals and asylums; that which has charge of out-door relief and pauper children. There is also a central office, at which twelve physicians and six surgeons attend to examine the poor who apply for admission to the hospitals or asylums. These hospitals are the Hôtel-Dieu, the Charité, the Saint Antoine, the Necker, the Cochin, the Beaujon, the Lariboisière, the Saint Louis, the Midi, the Lourcine, the Hospital for Sick Children (with six hundred beds, and a hundred extra in the Forges, a supplementary establishment), the Sainte Eugénie, the Maison d'Accouchement, the Cliniques, the Maison Municipale de Santé, and the Berck; seventeen hospitals, making up altogether six thousand eight hundred and seventeen beds. The asylums are the Bicêtre for old men, that for old women, Boulevard de l'Hôpital, that for male incurables, that for female incurables, the Enfants-Assistés, the Ménages la Rochefoucauld, the Sainte Perine, the Bouvard Asylum, the Reconnaissance, the Devillas, and the Lambrechts, twelve asylums, making up more than ten thousand five hundred beds.

Under control of the same department of public charity are certain establishments of supply: a central bakery, a central meat establishment, a central wine-cellar, a central druggist's, and the provision department at the Halle. Montyon's charity for the poor leaving the hospitals, and the Spinning Works for the Indigent, are also under direction of the Central Committee.

Then there is, in each of the twenty arrondissements of Paris, a Public Charity Office, or Bureau de Bienfaisance, with twelve administrators under the presidency of the mayor, and an unlimited number of ladies, doctors, sisters of charity, and so forth, working in concert with it. In each arrondissement, varying in number according to the extent of its poverty, are poor houses served by sisters of charity. In all the arrondissements there are said to be ninety thousand returned by the last census as the poor. About a thousand paid officials are employed in almsgiving, at an expense of about fifty-eight thousand a year. In aid of all this public machinery the private charity of Paris establishes and maintains public nurseries, reformatories, and other valuable institutions.

The Bureau of Benevolence does not touch causes of poverty; it simply gives bread, meat, clothes, fuel, and medicine, to those who are in sore want of them. In arrondissements where the rich are many and the poor are few, the help is bountiful; where the rich are few, and the poor many, the average of aid to each pauper may be only a third as much. It is two pounds eighteen shillings a head in the ninth arrondissement, but in the thirteenth only fifteen and sixpence. Very little is done in concert with employers of labour or otherwise to convert beggars into workers. "It appears," says Mr. Jerrold, "to have become the settled conviction of the Paris municipal authorities, that poverty can be obliterated by driving a boulevard through its head-quarters." But the poor thus driven out of sight of visitors are not lost sight of by the authorities. A system recently introduced, of giving them, when sick, gratuitous medical attendance in their own homes, was taken advantage of chiefly for women and children by more than half the registered population of the poor within a single year. The average cost to the town of each patient so attended is about thirteen shillings; of a patient in hospital the average cost is two pounds. The home tending helps to keep alive family feeling, but it must be on many accounts less efficient. Nearly two hundred doctors are engaged in attendance on the sick poor at their homes, but while in one arrondissement there will be a doctor to every hundred patients, in another there will be only a doctor to every four hundred.

Seventeen thousand children under the age of twelve are maintained at the charge of the Department of the Seine, as much as possible not in the asylum but in country cottages, where they are put out to be nursed and brought up in artificial homes. Nearly three thousand four hundred deserted children and foundlings were gathered off the streets of Paris in the year eighteen 'sixty-one, and charge also was taken of about four hundred orphans; but seven hundred of this little brigade of children died within the twelvemonth. Of the abandoned infants half the number die at nurse. Poverty is said to be the cause of by far the largest number of these desertions.

"Improvements of Paris" have been gradually depriving the very poor of shelter for a family. In the fifteen years ending in 'fifty-six, the number of poor lodged in garrets for less than two pounds a year had decreased by more than one half; the number of those paying between four and eight pounds had doubled; and the number of those paying between eight and twelve pounds, had risen from one hundred and eighty-seven to one thousand and sixteen. In five years more, in 'sixty-one, the lodgings of two pounds and under no longer existed; and the number of poor compelled to pay rents of between four and eight pounds, has trebled during the last twenty years.

To receive any help from the bureau of his arrondissement, the applicant for regular relief must, if a Frenchman, have lived for a year in Paris; if a foreigner, have lived for ten years in France. The blind, the palsied, the crippled, and those infirm with age who have reached threescore and ten, receive, after five years' residence in Paris (including two years on the out-door list, or ten years' residence and one year on the out-door list), annual and regular relief. The oldest men—men of eighty-four or more—receive, when destitute, nine and sixpence a month; and the scale descends to the four shillings a month paid to men of seventy, and to those of the paralytic and the blind who do not add great age to their other infirmity. To others, when sick, or wounded, or otherwise in want, occasional relief is given, and this may be claimed by heads of poor families where there are three children all under fourteen years of age. But no relief is given to a poor family of which the children are untaught and unvaccinated. So much of this rule as applies to non-vaccination might be adopted, with advantage, in our own country. It would be hardly fair to visit the restriction upon the parents of untaught children until education becomes as accessible here as vaccination is. The committee of the district bureau in Paris decides upon all applications, entering those admitted into a book for itself, and into another book for the divisional administrator, and into a third for the central bureau of the Quai Pelletier. The relief given is also documentary, being as much in kind as possible. Tickets for meat and bread are taken to the central butchery and bakery connected with this scheme of poor relief; so with fuel, &c. Clothing is distributed by the secretary, or by the sisters of a maison de secours, on the authority of an administrator. Money, when given, must be given by the hands of the secretary into the hands of the person for whose relief it is intended, except when it is paid through a curé or the superior of a maison de secours, to buy clothes for the first communion of a pauper's child.

On the reports of administrators, miscellaneous gifts are distributed of wooden legs, bandages, mechanical stays, and so forth, to poor persons who need them, without asking whether their names are otherwise on the books of the bureau. The bureau also gives tickets

of relief as a viaticum for poor persons upon a journey, licenses hawkers, grants exemption from taxes, and sees that the clothes of persons dying in hospital are delivered to their relatives. It also lends, in urgent cases, shirts and bedding, and will sometimes help a widow to apprentice her boy, or to pay her rent.

A certain number of pensions, each of them a little over ten pounds a year for men, and a little under eight pounds for women, are distributed by the Assistance Publique among the twenty bureaux of the twenty arrondissements for the help of the poor. They are paid monthly, but the winter instalments are made larger than those paid in summer. But these pensions are paid in each case with the bureau's special regard to the wants of the receiver, in money when necessary, in kind when possible, and with careful regard to the sort of assistance wanted. The receivers of these pensions get also medical advice, medicine, and baths gratuitously, and lose their grant if they are caught begging or found guilty of misconduct. The doctors of the bureau attend like our dispensary doctors, in certain places and at certain times, to prescribe for the poor who come there. As a check upon the doctors, an official from the bureau goes round among the sick poor of the district to see that they are properly attended at their homes, this official filling up a document in the sick-room as evidence on his own account that he has paid his visit of inspection. When the sick poor are convalescent, the bureau sends them, if necessary, to the convalescent hospital of Vincennes or to the Vesinet, and the convalescents from the hospitals get from their bureaux, under certain conditions, Montyon's bounty of twenty francs, in money or in kind.

At a Bureau of Benevolence most of the business with applicants is transacted on the ground floor. On the first floor are the secretary's offices, and at the top is the great collection of clothes of all sorts, from baby-linen upwards, ready made, packed, and sorted. An infinite variety of tickets of all colours represents the French taste for organisation. Say, it is the doctor who is wanted. A clerk is applied to, who sends Galen a printed letter of direction to attend, with a printed reminder that he will find at the patient's house a printed form on which he will be good enough to make entries at every visit, that he will find also a printed letter, of which he must at once fill up the blanks, describing the probabilities of the case at first sight. This letter he is to seal up and leave for the visitor or administrator from the bureau, who has in his turn to fill up a form showing his own name, the doctor's name, the name, age, address, calling, and floor of the patient, how many children he has, and how old they are, what trades any of them follow, the family's means, individually and generally; whether the patient has been in the hospital, what rent he pays; whether he is in arrears, how many rooms he lives in; whether he can afford a fire, and has one; whether there is any fit person connected with him to act as nurse;

whether his sickness stops the earnings of any other member of the family; whether he has a bed, and if so, what kind of bed; whether he has sheets, and if so, how many; whether he has shirts, and if so, how many; how long he has been attended, and how much or little he is the better for attention; also any observations that may seem worth adding, and whatever the visitor himself has to recommend. Upon the knowledge given by that document the Relief Commission forms its plan of assistance. A dozen or more charitable ladies give voluntary help to the honorary commissioners in the performance of these duties, and there are fixed days and hours in which certain administrators agree to attend at the relief houses. Marriage papers, certificates of birth, or other necessary documents, are got for the poor by this agency, exempt from stamp duty and every other fee. Vaccination is not only gratuitous, but the poor are tempted to a duty they but half understand by vaccination tickets, which secure to the holder half-a-crown for every child that he or she has had vaccinated. In the fifth, which is the poorest, arrondissement a hundred and thirty-two pounds was a year's cost of such kindly bribery, seven thousand seven hundred pounds was the year's cost of the bread given to the needy, and about two thousand five hundred pounds the cost for medical attendance. The bureau lends beds or bedding, gives straw for mattresses twice a year, distributes wooden shoes, bribes into marriage poor couples whose union is unblest by the priest, and secures for the dead poor gratuitous burial by the administration of the *Pompes Funèbres*. Besides its share of the revenue for the poor raised by the municipality in the way of tax on luxuries, there are in each arrondissement occasional balls and fêtes for the benefit of its poor, four collections a year in the churches, and an annual distribution of papers for the levy of poor-rate by voluntary contributions. A rich house will sometimes give in that way as much as forty pounds, the Bank of France pays twenty pounds.

So much for the bureau. In the dependent houses of relief the work is done by sisters, under a sister superior, the sisters getting lodging, fire, and light, and finding themselves food and clothing, for a pay of twenty pounds a year to each. On the top floors are primary schools for the young children of the poor, who are provided also with play-rooms. At the houses of relief the doctors attend to see the sick, who come and get prescription papers from an official engaged to attend to that part of the system. The simpler sort of dispensing is done by the sisters in a little apothecary's shop of their own; the more difficult by an authorised druggist. The sisters also keep ready-made clothes for the poor, and good flannel waistcoats for the delicate, delivered to those who produce orders from the bureau. Orphans live in the house with them, and the duties are performed by them with open heart and ready wit and will.

No doubt the Parisian scheme of poor relief,

which is a substitute not only for our London poor law system, but for our general poor law system, and all those systems of private benevolence with which in London it is largely supplemented, supplies a very distinct and truly admirable example of well-organised voluntary effort for the direct help of the suffering poor. But Mr. Blanchard Jerrold overlooks much labour of his own countrywomen, when he says: "If that great society for the Relief of Destitution in the English metropolis, which has its handsome offices at Charing-Cross, would take the trouble to send a deputation to the *Quai Pelletier*, they might develop from the operations of M. Husson's subordinates a system of district visiting in London less contemptible than that which now flickers, feeble and ridiculous, where the London poor are massed." At the time when this was written, the association thus pointed out was aiding in London eighty-three districts, including a total population of about a million, each having a separate staff of voluntary district visitors. The number of visitors thus employed was one thousand one hundred and seventy-eight, of whom nine hundred and twenty-two were English women personally active in the distribution of what aid the funds of the association and the local voluntary contributions to the poor produced. In round numbers there was a district visitor for every five pounds of the money granted by the society, for every ten pounds of the whole sum forming the district funds. And this excludes from calculation all district private care for the poor that is entered in no book but that of the recording angel. The number of even fashionable ladies, harried by the incessant toil of fulfilling valueless engagements, who in London come into direct womanly contact with some of their poorer sisters, is, we suspect, greater in London than in Paris. In the English provinces, this kind of voluntary ministration is more general. Amongst families numbering ladies of even small fortune, it is the rule—a rule not in every case followed with discretion, but always as a duty, and with a benevolent motive. We shall never in London carry "administration" to the point attained in Paris, but we are learning every year more and more how to do good to many of our poor in the directest and yet least obtrusive way.

The foundlings of Paris, gathered into the great establishment in the *Rue d'Enfer*, with more than five hundred beds and more than eighty cradles, are also under the protection of the "*Assistance Publique*." Their nursery is a great hall, in which are four rows of cradles with carpeted pathways between them. Sisters in huge caps, and nurses in blue and white, flit silently about, and a great mattress lies before the fireplace, where the babies as they come in, sometimes ten in a day, are unpacked. Each has been through an official routine, and has its name, number, and date of admission fastened by a slip of parchment to its arm. The little ones are fetched away by the country nurses among whom they are distributed. Each child

is taken with a necklace of seventeen bone beads, and a silver padlock and seal, with an attached medal, having on one side the child's number, and on the other side an effigy of St. Vincent de Paul. This necklace must not be unfastened till the child is six years old. Besides the nursery are a sick ward and a surgical ward, a shelter for the boys who, after their nursing in village homes, have come back to be redistributed or apprenticed, and a like lodging for girls, each with a playground. There is a gymnasium and a large kitchen garden. There are offices, stables, cow-houses, eight cows being kept to supply milk for the establishment, and a morsel of forest land—in Paris, within a stone's throw of the Observatory—adjoins the girls' playground. In this little wood, nurses and babies sit on the grass, nightingales sing on summer evenings, and hither the elder children, always under close superintendence, come in brigades for air and recreation. But the distribution of the children into homes among poor families of the provinces, with a retention of strict check and oversight, is a very sound part of the Paris foundling system.

In the Rue St. Jacques the old Seminary of St. Magloire is now the Imperial Deaf and Dumb Asylum for Boys, two hundred and fifty in number, who are elaborately managed, and after receiving four years of primary education, are during the next three years taught trades. Parents of fair means pay forty pounds a year to the asylum when they wish a deaf and dumb child of their own to be as well educated as its infirmity permits.

The old, the infirm, and the mad, are grouped in two vast establishments—the Salpêtrière, which is the asylum for old women, and the Bicêtre, which is the asylum for old men. Of the insane in France, forty-six per cent are in state or departmental asylums entirely devoted to them, twenty-four per cent are in private asylums, and the other thirty per cent form groups in the asylums of the aged.

The Salpêtrière first came into life as an asylum rather more than two centuries ago, when, in the year sixteen hundred and fifty-three, some of the poor beggars of the city and suburbs of Paris were received into the old building known as the Little Arsenal, then used as a manufactory of saltpetre, or salpêtrière. Cardinal Mazarin has left word to us that it cost forty thousand livres to adapt the buildings as an establishment, with something less than five hundred beds for the use of the poor. The buildings were considerably enlarged in the time of Louis the Fourteenth; since then, addition after addition has been made. In eighteen 'twenty-three the place was re-named the Asylum for Old Women, and, as regards the mad women, it is here that Pinel and Esquirol, breaking through many horrible old traditional beliefs, began the right and humane treatment of the insane. There are now in the Salpêtrière forty-five district buildings, covering a population of more than five thousand persons, and maintained by an annual expenditure of about eighty thousand pounds.

The Bicêtre, now occupied by the poor old men and male pauper lunatics of Paris, was originally a castle built by Jean de Pointoise, Bishop of Winchester. The name was soon corrupted into Wicestre, and that into Bicêtre. The ruined castle was, in Cardinal Mazarin's time, a refuge for foundlings, and for poor old men and pauper lunatics. It was there, by the way, that in seventeen 'ninety-two the newly invented guillotine was first tried on a corpse. The Bicêtre, like the Salpêtrière, has grown by successive additions and changes, and improvements are still going forward in its buildings, which are grouped about nine open courts. Its roofs cover a population of more than three thousand, at a cost for each of about sixteen-pence a day, which is fourpence a day more than the cost of each woman in the Salpêtrière.

A warehouse for the clothes and linen used in the Parisian hospitals and asylums is known as the "Filature des Indigents." It is housed in the old hospital of the Charité Notre-Dame, suppressed during the late revolution. This house distributes spinning work to nearly a thousand old women, of whom the best worker cannot earn more than sevenpence halfpenny, and the majority earn only about fourpence a day.

In the Rue de Sèvres is the Asylum for Incurable women. The Asylum for Incurable Men is at the old barracks in the Rue Popincourt. But at Ivry, where the Assistance Publique has land, the two are to be united in a building with two thousand beds, half of the number for the men, half for the women. The Home for Incurable Women owes its existence to the charity of Marguerite Rouille, wife of a counsellor of the Château, who gave to the Hôtel-Dieu, in the year sixteen 'thirty-two, a large property, on the condition that a house should be built on it as the Asylum for the Poor Incurables of Saint Marguerite. About the same time Cardinal la Rochefoucauld founded a like establishment on the Sèvres road, and in the present establishment the two foundations are united. The incurables have very comfortable quarters, and, if able, may go freely out and in at all hours of the daylight.

These are the chief institutions that represent the great Parisian system of poor relief. At this time of year, when winter winds begin to whistle round street corners, that system is in its fullest activity. The twenty bureaux begin to see about the distributing of winter clothing, the little sisters of the poor beg with fresh energy for their five houses full of old people, the benevolent society that redeems clothes and tools out of pawn comes into full activity, the allowances of permanent relief rise to their highest level, and in Paris as in London the rich are especially reminded of their duties to the poor. If some of the functionaries who dispense our English poor-relief, and who are for ever sounding the praises of local self-government on a cracked fiddle with one string, were a little more steadily and sternly re-

minded of *their* duties too, it would be better for all of us, and much more to the honour of England.

QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER LIV. LOVE AND GRATITUDE.

THE secret which the little bird whispered to Lily perplexed and agitated her very much.

She had noticed the rise in her mother's fortunes, but ascribed it to the popularity of her performances in the circus, and the liberality of Mr. M'Variety, the manager. The little bird told her quite another story. It told her that the dainty white bedroom had been furnished for her by Sir William Long. It was easy to infer from this that the Cottage, the renewed engagement, the increase of her mother's salary, the benefit, and the elegant supper, all came from the same quarter.

For whose sake had the baronet spent so much money, and taken so much trouble? For her mother's? Lily would fain have let her heart answer this question in the affirmative, but try as she would, she could not impose that conviction upon herself. Something, some still small voice of the past, told her that it was not for her mother's sake that the baronet had done all these things, but for her own.

Lily strove to think that it was done in pity for her hard life and forlorn condition; that it was simply the act of a generous and sympathising nature. But while she struggled to interpret his motives in this wise, her heart was agitated by a suspicion that filled her with a vague feeling of dread.

Could it be possible that Sir William Long loved her?

That was the question which strove to shape itself in her mind. But Lily repressed it, and kept it down, dreading to have to answer it. And this she did to guard the image which sat enthroned in her breast—the image of Edgar Greyfaunt. But the question arose again and again, and shaped itself definitely, and demanded to be answered; and Lily, still hesitating, went back over her weary life to the Greenwich dinner. She had so few remembrances of pleasant days, that she was not likely to forget that day. It arose in her memory sharp and clear, a bright green island in the midst of a great waste of waters. She remembered sitting on Sir William Long's knee; she recalled the kind things he said to her, and how happy she felt at being near him. If she had never thought of him from that time until this moment, she might have forgotten how he looked, where they sat, what kind things he said to her, and many other little particulars of the occasion. But she had thought of him often, and carried him forward on every new page of the ledger of her life up to the day when she wrote the name of Edgar Greyfaunt upon it. She thought of the tall, kind gentleman less frequently after that; but

she had thought of him so often before, that his image was indelibly impressed upon her memory. She remembered everything; how he had laughed and chatted with her, and asked her her name, and inquired how old she was. She remembered his peeling the apple and throwing the peel over his shoulder, and saying that it would form the initial of her sweetheart's name; how the peel lay on the carpet in the shape of a W, and how she clapped her hands and said she should like to be his little wife, and make him a pair of nice red muffatores for the winter. And she remembered his stooping down and kissing her on the forehead, and saying, "I heartily wish you were my little sister, or my little daughter." Last of all, she remembered that she was eight years of age then, and he twenty-eight.

So far as Lily knew, she was now in her twentieth year. And Sir William? Sir William was forty!

When Lily had worked out this little sum, and saw the figures staring her in the face, she closed her eyes against them, as if by so doing she could shut out the reflections to which they gave rise.

She went back over her recollections of the Greenwich dinner again, and always when she came to those parting words her heart was relieved: "I heartily wish you were my little sister, or my daughter."

When Madame Ernestine was at the circus rehearsing a new act of the haute-école for her benefit, Lily wandered from room to room, thinking, thinking, thinking. Every object upon which her eyes rested was as dreary, and miserable, and forlorn as her own heart. Looking from the windows of the Cottage through the pelting rain, she saw the leafless trees nodding at her like grim spectres; the weeping ash-trees bare and gaunt, overhanging the seats and tables, appeared to her like huge skeleton hands waiting to crush the votaries of pleasure in their grip. Through the mist and drizzle of the winter's day, the black flower-beds loomed upon her sight like graves, of which the dripping dirt-begrimed statues were the head-stones, sacred to the memory of departed flowers, which seemed to have died without issue. The Muscovite illusion had in part been rudely dispelled by the winter's wind. A portion of the cupolas of the Kremlin had been blown down, and the gap revealed some stacks of South Lambeth chimneys, smoking dismally, and dropping tears of soot upon the dingy gables.

One day, when Lily was looking out upon this dreary scene, wondering if those trees would ever again be covered with leaves; if those scrubs and stumps in the beds would ever again rise from their sepulchres crowned with the glory of flowers, wondering if her own heart would ever throb to an emotion of joy, she saw the figure of a man looming through the mist, and approaching the Cottage. As the figure came nearer, Lily recognised Mr. Kafooze.

Taking him in his most favourable aspect, Mr. Kafooze was not a cheerful person to look

upon. In a pretty picture the most indulgent critic would have regarded him as a blemish. Under the present circumstances, an ordinary observer would have viewed him in the light of an additional horror—a bat that had flitted across the sky, or an owl that had suddenly perched upon a bare and gnarled branch to complete the dismal picture. But to poor Lily the lean wizened figure of the astrologer was a thing of beauty; his coming was an angel's visit; for she knew that he had a feeling heart, and he was one of the very few persons who had ever spoken kindly to her.

The conduct of Mr. Kafooze was mysterious. He approached the Cottage, and disappeared from Lily's sight, leading her to suppose that he was in the porch knocking for admission; but presently he loomed in sight again, and walked about in front of the Cottage, looking up, and shading his eyes with his hand. Any one but Lily would have characterised Mr. Kafooze's conduct as "prowling;" but Lily soon perceived that he was trying to attract some person's attention. And who could that person be but herself?

She tapped at the window, and beckoned to him to come in; and, assured by this, Mr. Kafooze went round and entered the porch. Lily ran down stairs immediately and opened the door. Mr. Kafooze dry was not precisely an embodiment of happiness; but Mr. Kafooze wet was a monument of misery which left no further depth to be reached. It would have been hard to give an adequate idea of the wretchedness of his appearance, without calling in the illustrative services of the "drowned rat."

"Oh, do come in, Mr. Kafooze, out of the rain," Lily said.

"No, thank you, my dear," said the astrologer. "I—I won't come in; your ma will be finished presently, and I shouldn't like her to see me here."

"But you will get wet through, Mr. Kafooze," pleaded Lily.

"Oh, never mind, my dear; the wet doesn't hurt me. I'm used to it," said the astrologer. "I've been used to it all my life. If there's a shower of rain anywhere, I'm sure to be out in it without an umbrella. It's my star, my dear. I was born under a bad aspect of Aquarius, with Scorpio in opposition. Under such circumstances, you're sure to forget your umbrella, even if it wasn't full of holes and three ribs broken. No, never mind, my dear, I only wanted to say a word. I've been looking back, my dear, among my books, with the data you gave me, and I have found your star."

"It's very good of you to take so much trouble," said Lily.

"Oh, not at all, my dear; I like it. I'm never so happy as when I am studying the stars. Well, my dear, if your data be correct, you were born under a very peculiar conjunction. Mars was in Leo, you see, which is bad. I assure you I was very anxious about it at first, until I went a little further, and found that though in Leo at that time, he was passing out

of that sign and entering Libra, which is good; if it were not that Uranus was in Cancer. However, my dear, as Jupiter passed the place of the sun a few days afterwards, I think the aspect is a favourable one, signifying that you will get over the evil influence of Mars in Leo. That is all, my dear; and I thought I would just come round and tell you while your ma is at rehearsal."

"It's very kind of you, I'm sure, Mr. Kafooze," Lily said; "but do come in and dry yourself by the fire."

"No, my dear, no; madame will be here directly, and I must clear out of her way. Good-by! Good-by!"

"Stay. One moment, Mr. Kafooze," said Lily, laying her hand upon his arm.

"Yes, my dear."

"You know several languages, don't you, Mr. Kafooze?"

"Well," he said, "I—I have a smattering of two or three."

"Perhaps, then," faltered Lily, "you can tell me the meaning of—of 'apes.'"

"Yes, my dear," said the schoolmaster; "it's a Latin word, and it means Hope."

"Hope!" said Lily. "Oh, thank you, Mr. Kafooze, thank you. Good-by! Good-by!"

It was perhaps lucky for Mr. Kafooze that he did not remain longer talking about his stars; for he had scarcely passed out of the gate before Madame Ernestine emerged from the circus, and came across the gardens accompanied by a posse of male friends. These friends were Lord Carlton, Sir William Long, the Marquis Greyfaunt, Mr. Thomas Tuttleshell, and Mr. M'Variety, the manager. The countess ushered her friends into her new abode with much ironical courtesy, mingling her mock civilities with maledictions upon the English weather, and upon everything else English, except the Ship at Greenwich, and the Star and Garter at Richmond.

"We must have a dinner at one or other of those places after the benefit," said Lord Carlton.

"A dinner at Greenwich!" the countess exclaimed, with sparkling eyes. "Ah, that is what I love. There is nothing in England worth living for but a dinner at Greenwich, with those little fishes."

"But the little fishes are not in season yet," said Lord Carlton.

"Pourquoi pas?" said the countess; "why are not those little fishes always in season?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said his lordship.

"N'importe," said the countess, "we shall have a dinner at Greenwich after the benefit, shall we not?"

"Certainly," said Lord Carlton.

The countess rushed up-stairs before her visitors to prepare Lily. She hurried her out of the front room, where she was sitting rapt in thought, into the bedroom.

"Now attend to me," she said; "I will have no faints, no shrieks; you are not a child. I have visitors; Milord Carlton, and Sir William Long, and Monsieur Greyfond. Arrange your hair, and come into the apartment à l'instant."

Lily was quite scared by the sudden pounce which her mother had made upon her, and her agitation was now further increased by the mention of Edgar's name. He was in the next room, and Sir William Long was there also! If she had had time to reflect, she would probably have given way to her emotions, as she had done before; but in sheer desperation she nerved herself to the ordeal, and followed her mother into the reception-room.

Mr. M'Variety was the first to address her.

"Ah, missy, how do you do? Looking pale, eh? I expected to see you quite rosy, living in the gardens here, among the trees and the fresh air."

And the manager shook hands with her. Then the rest in succession, ending with the sultan, who grasped her hand warmly, and was quite gracious. Lily was ready to faint, but she sustained herself, and sat down on an ottoman by the window, the sultan taking a chair near her, with his face towards her.

While the countess was rallying her visitors and inviting them to partake of some wine, which she assured them, in a significant manner, was not of the vintage of South Lambeth, the Sultan Greyfaunt condescended to open a conversation with the "little party." He spoke slightly in an under tone.

"I hope I may look upon you as an old friend, mademoiselle," he said, with a smile.

Poor Lily's heart was in her mouth. She knew not what to reply. It was not so much Edgar's words that agitated her (for they were cold and formal enough) as his look and his smile. In Paris his behaviour to her had always been haughty and cold. Now he was gracious, and something more. Lily would have found it difficult to define that something more which his manner implied; but she *felt* it, and the colour mantled to her pale cheeks.

"We were friends in Paris," Edgar pursued, "and I hope we shall be better friends in London."

Lily's heart was beating fast, and her face was becoming crimson. She muttered something in reply, she knew not what, and then her glance fell upon Sir William Long. He was sitting among the countess's visitors, not joining in their conversation, nor listening to them, nor taking any heed of them, but gazing pensively and thoughtfully, with a touch of dejection in his face, at her—at her and Edgar seated together in the window.

Suddenly the countess turned round and saw them.

"Ah, Monsieur Greyfond!" she exclaimed, "what are you saying to mamselle there in the corner? Vous êtes un mauvais sujet." And she shook her finger at him with a ghastly assumption of reproof. "Come," she said, "sit by me. I wish to talk to you concerning my benefit."

Edgar moved away from Lily, and sat down beside the countess.

"Will you not take a box for my benefit?" she said. "All my friends here have taken boxes."

"Yes, and paid for them," said Mr. Thomas Tuttlesbell, "like gentlemen." Mr. Thomas Tuttleshell lost no opportunity of talking at his serene highness. He was continually shooting random arrows, in the hope that a stray one might hit the mark and rankle somewhere.

"Oh yes, certainly," said his highness. "And the price? how much?"

"How much?" exclaimed the countess, in an injured tone. "You ask a lady on the occasion of her benefit, how much?"

Mr. Thomas Tuttleshell chuckled with much inward satisfaction.

"Oh, well, the fact is," said Greyfaunt, "I have very little loose cash about me; but—but I will give you a cheque upon my bankers." And he wrote a cheque for twenty pounds, and handed it to the countess with the air of a millionaire.

"Vingt livres!" exclaimed the countess. "Monsieur Greyfond, vous êtes un prince. Give me your hand."

Mr. Thomas Tuttleshell's satisfaction subsided a little. Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt had paid more for his box than any of the others!

"And now, my lord and messieurs," said the countess, "as you have invited me to dine with you at Greenwich, I beg you will honour me with your presence at a petit souper in my château here after the performance on Friday. Say, will you do me the honour?"

"Oh, certainly," the visitors said in a breath, as they rose to take their departure; "we shall be most happy."

"Bon," said the countess, "we shall have a snug little party. We shall be gay."

On taking leave, Edgar shook hands with Lily with the same warmth as before; and he looked at her with the same smile and expression which had made her heart throb and her cheeks flush when he first addressed her.

Sir William Long was the last to go up and bid her good-by.

"Have you quite forgotten your old Greenwich acquaintance?" he said.

"Forgotten you!" said Lily, taking his hand.

"I shall ever remember you, ever think of you—with gratitude."

Sir William drove home that afternoon with the cold word sticking in his throat, like something he could not swallow.

"For me gratitude," he muttered to himself, "and for that brainless, heartless puppy, love! Oh Lily, Lily!"

CHAPTER LV. THE LAST NIGHT OF THE SEASON.

"RANELAGH! Last night of the winter season! Benefit of Madame Ernestine, the world-renowned exponent of the High School of Horsemanship, who will appear on her trained steed Constant, and perform an entirely new act, descriptive of a Buffalo Hunt on the Prairies of the Far West! Ten thousand extra lamps! Additional and special attractions for this occasion only! N.B. Prices as usual."

Thus the advertising columns of the newspapers; thus the hoardings and the dead walls;

thus the perambulating sandwiches, with so very little human ham in the middle; thus countless little handbills that were jerked at the passers-by, glanced at, and thrown to the winter's wind to be driven against pillars and posts, to be caught in railings and gratings, and eventually to be chased into calm corners, there to lie and give rise in too hopeful breasts to the delirious suspicion of five-pound notes.

The day arrived, and it was fine. The air was clear and crisp, and for the first time for some weeks the sun came out for a little while, pale and sickly, like an invalid taking his first airing after a long illness. Mr. M'Variety assured the countess that she might rely upon a bumper.

"You see, countess, in the winter there's nothing like a fine bright day to give the public an appetite for a play or an entertainment. It acts upon them like a bottle of champagne, or a 'picker-up' after a heavy bout the night before. But it's just the contrary in the summer, if the entertainment be an in-door one. Then there's nothing like a shower of rain about five o'clock in the afternoon. A good smart shower, or a gloomy drizzle, will drive them in in flocks, like chickens to roost. Only give me the key of the weather," said the manager, "and I'll make Ranelagh pay in the winter and Drury Lane in the summer."

The countess was busy with her preparations for the little supper which she was to give to "her friends" after the performance, and did not take much heed of the managerial philosophy. Indeed, she was not much interested; for her friends and her friends' friends had already taken a large number of tickets at fancy prices, and thus her own share was secured.

But M'Variety had a little matter of business in view, and continued to lead up to it with some general observations on managerial policy. He came at length to the point.

"What about those tickets, countess?"

The countess paused in her occupation, and looked up at her manager sharply.

"What about those tickets? What tickets?" she asked.

"The tickets you have sold to your swell friends," said the manager.

"Well, sir, what about them? I do not understand you."

"Our arrangement," said the manager, "was half the receipts of the circus; it was a very liberal one, I think, on my part."

"On *your* part!" The countess threw back his words with a sneer.

"Come, come, countess, be reasonable. Admit that I have done my best for you, at any rate. And a bargain's a bargain, you know." Mr. M'Variety was beginning to plead with her. The countess perceived this, and took advantage of it.

"I understand you," she said; "you expect me to give you half of the sums which I have received from my friends; half of the twenty pounds, for example, which Monsieur Greyfond presented to me."

"Exactly," said the manager; "that's only fair."

"Then," said the countess, sternly, "I shall do no such thing. What is the price of Monsieur Greyfond's box? Tell me that!"

"Two guineas," said the manager.

"Très bien," said the countess, "you shall have the half; you shall have one guinea."

"Oh, come, countess, that won't do at all," the manager protested.

"Stay," said the countess; "tell me this.

Monsieur Greyfond gave twenty pounds for a box which he might have had for two guineas. Was it for your sake that he lavished his money thus?"

M'Variety was getting nettled.

"Well, if it comes to that, countess," he said, "was it for yours?"

The countess had been biting her lip and restraining herself hitherto, but she burst out now.

"Insolent!" she exclaimed; "how dare you come here, into my own house, into my own apartment, to take from me the presents of my friends, to rob me, to insult me with your vulgar words! But, I tell you, I will not submit to your extortion. I will die first."

She flounced about the room with glaring eyes and clenched hands as she said this; and at length put a climax to her rage by seizing one of the china ornaments on the mantelshelf and dashing it to atoms against the grate.

M'Variety was sorry he had spoken.

"Look you," continued the countess; "rather than you shall have any share in my presents, I will take the notes and the cheques and put them into the fire."

The countess had the best of the position in every way. She had the money in her pocket, and, for the rest, she was utterly indifferent to consequences. The manager was fully aware of this, and refrained from pursuing the subject further.

"I'll bid you good afternoon, countess," he said, "and talk to you another time, when you are in a better temper."

"A better temper!" she shouted after him, as he descended the stairs; "you would vex the temper of an angel." And she slammed the door upon him savagely.

"If ever the devil had a daughter," said the manager, as he crossed the garden, "yon's she, for a certainty."

Madame Ernestine's temper did not obey the law of ordinary violent disorders. It was at all times sharp; but never short. When she had run up the crescendo scale to the highest note in the gamut of fury, she went back and repeated the same exercise again and again, with an increase rather than a diminution of brilliant execution. She fumed and stormed all the afternoon, and when she walked across to the circus to begin her performance, the thunder was still rumbling.

As she was entering the circus she met Lord Carlton. She recovered herself immediately, and saluted his lordship gently.

"Ah, milord, how do you do? You have come to honour me with your presence, I perceive. It is very gracious of you."

"Oh, not at all," his lordship replied, "beauty and talent always command my homage. It would have been impossible for me to stay away on such an occasion."

"Your lordship is most flattering," said the countess, with a grin. "By the way," she added, "your lordship honoured me with a charming present, this riding-whip."

"A bagatelle," said his lordship.

"Oh, not at all," said the countess. "I value it very much. I have not used it hitherto; but I shall use it for the first time to-night, on the occasion of my benefit."

"You do me honour," said his lordship.

"You are very kind to say so, milord—but excusez-moi, it is time that I go and dress. Shall I have the honour of your lordship's company to supper in my humble château?"

"Certainly," said his lordship; "it will give me great pleasure."

"Then adieu pour le moment," said the countess; "we shall meet at supper."

She encountered old Kafooze in the passage leading to her dressing-room. She was not so gracious to him.

"Ah! ganache, ogre, corbeau, oiseau de mauvais augure! what did you say?—that I should have no luck?" And she struck at the old man with her whip. Old Kafooze sprang aside with wonderful agility, but did not avoid the blow. The whip caught him a sharp cut across the shoulders, and made him writhe; but he said never a word, and slunk away as fast as he could, putting it all down to Scorpio in that bad conjunction with Aquarius.

Mr. M'Variety proved a true prophet. The fine bright weather brought the people out, and the gardens were well filled, considering that it was the winter season. The visitors, however, were soon tired of promenading among the ten thousand extra lamps, whose brilliancy only tended to make the wretchedness of the gardens more visible, and crushed into the circus in a body the moment the doors were opened. The circle and amphitheatre were speedily filled, and by-and-by Madame Ernestine's aristocratic friends began to drop into the boxes. Sir William Long was there in a box by himself, looking solemn and thoughtful. Greyfaunt was in the box adjoining, yawning, and looking inexpressibly bored by the performance of the Swiss Shepherdess. Lord Carlton had settled himself to sleep at once. Faintest was there also, and Mr. Thomas Tibbs, and many more, who came, not for the sake of patronising Madame Ernestine, but to be in the same train with Milord Carlton and Sir William Long.

The blank, listless countenances of these superior persons, satiated with a constant round of pleasure, presented a remarkable contrast to the bright happy expectant faces that glistened under the lamps in the amphitheatre. In the eyes of those humble folks, who had worked hard for the shillings they had paid at the doors,

everything was delightful, beautiful, charming. The Shepherdess in her flowered muslin skirt, with her crook, dancing and skipping upon the padded saddle, hailed by Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt as a "scraggy fright," was to them an aerial creature belonging to another sphere; the Three Graces were real divinities in petticoats, exciting the admiration of the male sex by the exquisite shape of their legs, and the pinkness of their complexions; and of the female sex—especially those of a domestic turn, who did their washing at home—by the perfection exhibited in the clear starching of their petticoats; Young Strangler hitching at mysterious strings, and skinning himself like a Protean onion, was a prodigy of daring and genius; the clowns with their old old jokes and stale antics; the master of the ring with his curly hair, his black moustache, and his hussar's jacket; the Frenchified looking grooms in the long coats, who pulled aside the curtain to admit the horses—all these persons were objects of the most boundless admiration, not unmixed with awe. Thunders of applause at the daring of Young Strangler, alternated with roars of boisterous laughter at the witticisms of the clown. These simple-minded shilling people, thoroughly bent upon enjoyment, were pleased even to recognise the scent of the stable, as it was wafted into the circus by the motion of the curtains, that scent which caused Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt to ejaculate many expressions of disgust, and to fan himself with his perfumed handkerchief.

Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt, voting all this intolerably slow and stupid, had strolled into Sir William Long's box. He was not a welcome visitor. Sir William scarcely took the trouble to return his greeting.

"What a horrid bore this is!" yawned the dandy; "and then to have to sit out that dreadful old harridan, Madame Ernestine! Really, it's more than one can endure. By the way, Long," he continued, "have you noticed that remarkable fellow sitting opposite? Look at him; he's the best part of the show, I think."

Sir William looked across in the direction indicated, and saw seated in one of the lower boxes a man of foreign appearance with grizzled hair, cropped very short, and eyebrows and moustache almost jet black. The dark moustache and eyebrows in contrast with his pale face and grey hair, gave the man a very singular appearance, and Sir William looked at him long and curiously.

"Quite a *lusus naturæ*," said the dandy; "I'll go and ask M'Variety if he knows who he is."

Young Strangler had concluded his Protean performance, and retired amid a tempest of applause; some French acrobats—"the additional attraction"—whom Mr. Thomas Tuttleshell had picked up at the Cirque Impérial in Paris, had illustrated the saying of Voltaire by showing the close resemblance between a Frenchman and a monkey, leaving the tiger part of the likeness to be exhibited in the Leicester-square café, to which they retired to wrangle over their domi-

noes and absinthe after the performance; the English clown had made some comments in disparagement of foreigners; and then, after a short pause, the orchestra struck up the familiar music, giving warning of the approach of Madame Ernestine, the world-renowned exponent of the *haute-école*. The velvet curtains were drawn aside, and Madame Ernestine, erect and stately, slowly entered the arena on her chestnut steed. Sir William Long at the moment was looking across at the foreigner with the grey head and the black moustache. He saw the man start and turn deadly pale, nay, ashy white, for he had been pale before; he saw him spring to his feet and clutch the front of the box, and then immediately sink into his seat again and withdraw from view. *Who* was this man, and what could have so strangely agitated him?

While Sir William was pondering upon this incident, the exposition of the *haute-école* began. It was the old affair: a long time before it came to anything, then the mare, tossing her neck and pawing with her right fore foot; then, backing to the edges of the ring, whisking her tail and causing a half-tittering, half-screaming commotion among the people in the front seats; then rearing on her haunches, curvetting and plunging, then cantering gently, and at last—as illustrating a buffalo-hunt in the prairies of the Far West—breaking into a gallop. The applause was gradually warming up; and madame was warming up with it. The more the people applauded, the more she endeavoured to urge the mare forward, now with fierce impatient words, now with her heel dug against her side, now with the whip laid smartly across her haunches. Faster and more furious! Faster still, in a mad career, kicking up the tan and sawdust and flinging it in showers over the audience, plunging deep into the soft bed of the arena, thudding with her hind hoofs against the hollow boards of the ring, snorting, panting, and reeking with a lather of sweat: round and round she went at a terrible pace, the countess keeping her seat bravely, and still stimulating the mare to further exertion with tongue, and whip, and heel. Now the scarves are thrown across, and the mare takes them at a bound, first one and then the other, plunging and rearing at every leap. The applause is deafening. The people, carried away by the impetuous career of the horse and its rider, have started to their feet. They are clapping their hands, waving hats and handkerchiefs, and shouting “Bravo! bravo! bravo!”

The mare suddenly refuses a leap, makes a sudden stop, and rears back upon the ring. The countess wheels her about, and once more puts her to it, with a wrench of the bridle and a savage cut of the whip across her ears. Over she goes with a mad plunge, throwing her hind hoofs high in the air. She is unable to recover herself at the next scarf, and stops a second time. Again the countess wheels her round and urges her to the leap, while the walls of the wooden building are trembling to the rolling thunder of applause.

At that moment the man with the grey hair

and the pale face and the strange black eyebrows and moustache appears in the front of his box.

In the midst of the tempest of applause a scream was heard, and then a heavy thud, and through a shower of sawdust and a steam of sweat the horror-stricken audience saw the form of Madame Ernestine hanging head downwards from the horse, and the next instant lying on the ground in a contorted heap trampled under its hoofs!

The people in the front seats immediately jumped into the arena to render assistance. Foremost among them was the foreign-looking man, with the grizzled hair and the dark eyebrows and moustache. He was the first to reach the prostrate form of the countess. He knelt down, lifted her into his arms and looked in her face. Her eyes were closed, her lips livid, and her temples were covered with blood.

The man who held her grasped her hand passionately. “Valérie,” he cried, in tones of deepest anguish, “speak to me, one word—one word!”

CALLING NAMES.

“WHAT’S in a Name?” Much, my dear Miss Capulet—as, at a less moonlit moment, and with fewer nightingales striving unsuccessfully to emulate your own most musical accents, you would yourself readily allow. Let nurse, dear old fidget, get your bonnet (Romeo has yet to disentangle that inconvenient mantle of his from the spikes), and let us enjoy a little reasonable chat before the nons—I beg pardon, love-making—begins.

You will allow me to take this garden-chair? Thank you. My voice, I trust, is audible in the balcony? Ah. The bonnet. That’s wise. The room, as your excellent father aptly remarked, and that salamander, your cousin Tybalt evidently felt, *had* grown too hot, and the sudden change might lead to a cold in the head.

To return to your very natural interrogation. “*What* is in a name?” Often, I regret to observe, a good deal of mystery. Now, this is a manifest departure from the admitted object with which names of any sort were bestowed. As such, it merits—and receives—my severest censure. The first grand purpose of nomenclature was, undoubtedly, identification; its avowed object to intimate that, in referring to Dick, you did not mean Tom. The second was subordinate or accessory. By investing Dick with some peculiar title, suggested by his habits, personal appearance, profession, &c., he became isolated from surrounding and succeeding Dicks, while it conveyed a pleasing insight, in the nature of a friendly introduction, into his peculiarities.

That these names, whether complimentary or otherwise, were accepted in the best spirit, there is no reason to doubt. Otho the Florid was not goaded into any reprehensible severities by the liberties taken with his complexion.

Edmund Ironside, Edward Longshanks, John Lackland—nay, not one of the long series of nicknamed monarchs: Balds, Bolds, Cruels, Milds, Fairs, Magnificents, Desireds, Debonnaires; the Great, the Fat, the White, the Red, the Brown, the Torpid, the Hunter, the Valiant, the Carpenter, the Mason, the Clock-maker, the Master, the Stutterer; down to the Georges, Farmer and Gentleman, and the Sailor-King—but acquiesced in the legitimate purpose of his sponsors, and transmitted his popular title to posterity, as the surest safeguard against being mixed up and forgotten in the ruck of sceptred gentlemen of similar name. Do you suppose that King Trustyman does not feel that *his* name, for example, shall go glittering down the ages with a splendour and distinctness of outline plain Victor-Emmanuel never could have retained?

True, there *are* names such as no gentleman, with any pretensions to self-respect, can be reasonably expected to approve. Robert the Devil, it may be, felt a morbid satisfaction in falling in with the popular estimate of his own character, and forgave the rudeness in the aptitude of the term. On the other hand, another hero, of considerable influence in his time, took the very same epithet (so much do great minds differ) so greatly to heart, that he got himself fairly exorcised by a no less powerful magician than King Louis the Eleventh. That respected sovereign, by letters patent, decreed that the surname of his barber, Oliver le Diable, should be thenceforth changed to that of "Malin," and, subsequently, of "Dain."

His majesty, with excellent taste, and much good feeling for his faithful chinscraper, affected ignorance of the diabolical title, making believe that "le Mauvais" was the worst extreme to which popular prejudice had reached. "Our will and pleasure being that he and all his posterity shall henceforward take and bear the surname of 'le Dain.' . . . Nor shall it be any longer permissible to describe the said Oliver as 'the Wicked,' which name we do by these presents cancel and abolish, &c. Given at Chartres, October, one thousand four hundred and seventy-four, in the fourteenth year of our reign."

It is not many years since there existed in France many families of respectable social status, possessing no surnames at all. And I believe I am not wrong in affirming that, two hundred years ago, the majority of families of middle rank, in Sweden, were in a similar predicament. Surely a little personality were preferable to the perpetual confusion that must have prevailed when "Jean, son of Pierre," "Thomas, son of Guillaume," &c., were the only distinctive appellations. In the instances of Wamba, the son of Witless, and Seigg, the immediate descendant of Snell, the rarity of these venerable Saxon names doubtless forbade mistake, but the range of modern christian names is restricted, and something more became absolutely necessary.

It was a pretty thought of Eusebius of Cesarea, adopting the name of a beloved friend,

to call himself Eusebius Pamphili (Pamphilus's Eusebius). Contrast it with the pretentious conduct of one "John," who, having entered into possession of a few acres at Holywood, Yorkshire, assumed the euphonious mouth-extending title of (see register) Johannes de Lacro-bosco!

This habit of assuming Latin surnames—or Latinising one's own name—was the parent of many a distinguished patronymic of our day, and must have added greatly to the personal dignity of the first wearers. Even now we encounter them in old records with a sensation of pleasure, and salute Rogerus Candidus (whoever he might have been) with a degree of respect we should hardly mete out to Hodge White. Similarly, Jacobus Faber is better pronouncing than Jem the Bean. In like manner, Petras Camerarius, Godofredus de Frontibus, Henricus Bonocolli, Raymundus de Pennaforti (no doubt the Broad-wood of his day), and Hubertus de Bonocours, are more acceptable to the tongue than Peter Chamberlain, Godfrey Brows, Harry Goodneck, Raymond Strong-wi'-the-Pen, and Hubert, whose name I will not injure by translation.

It is possible that the actual resources of our language, in the way of calling names, have hitherto remained a secret to many whose opportunities of mental improvement might have promised better results. Faint and indistinct ideas may indeed have been gathered from an accidental stoppage (say) within earshot of an Irish row, conducted in street-English, and (police expected) against time; or it may be that an argument in full fish-market, wherein sides were chosen by the entire community, has furnished glimmering indications of what an English matron, free of speech, can—as she would herself express it—lay her tongue to, upon necessity. It is a matter of regret to the student of language, if to nobody else, that the volubility which usually accompanies these oratorical displays, should occasion the loss of many a valuable term of reprobation, expressive, trenchant, irritating to perfection, and dating, it may be, from the days of that undoubted scold, Boadicea herself. That such searching arrows do lurk in the scold's quiver, has been over and over again demonstrated to the dispassionate observer, by a certain peculiar spasm of fury which is seen to possess the assailed party, at the receipt of some especial phrase which, though unintelligible to the common ear, manifestly sends home a sting of no ordinary depth and venom.

In acknowledging these losses, it is some consolation to remember what still remains at our command. I hasten to show, from a wordy quarrel between two eminent persons, pleading before a learned dignitary, what abundant facilities lie within the reach of every decently-educated individual, for being in the highest degree abusive.

Our scene is "in front of the judgment-seat of Minos." The disputants are "Evil Spirit" and "Devil's Advocate," and the reporter, on this occasion, an eccentric genius who, for reasons better known to himself than guessed

at by anybody else, has thrust this strange episode into the heart of a poem, fraught with the richest gems of thought and diction.

"Villain! Dolt! Knavel! Rascal! Donkey! Scoundrel! Ruffian! Booby!" commences, with comparative mildness, the E. S.

"Dunghill! Coward! Dunce! Rapsallion! Vagabond! Beast! Goose! Thief!" retorts the D. A.

"Swindler! Liar! Jolthead! Bully! Craven! Miscreant! Sot! Quack! Rebel!" pants his opponent.

"Pighead! Carrion! Cutpurse! Drunkard! Brawler! Mountebank! Cheat! Bravo! Vermin! Snip! Bull-beggar!" returns his learned brother.

"Tossopot! Pimp! Clown! Rat! Felon! Mooncalf! Noodle!"

This is pretty well, yet are these phrases but common tongue cuffs, after all. The first speaker dives into the recesses of the language.

"Gulligut! Boor! Filthard! Bardash! Royster! Druggel! Lubbard! Lout! Calf-lolly! Fox! Raggard!" are the gems he brings up.

Antagonist makes a deeper dive, and reappears with, "Nincempop! Lusk! Bilkslop! Jobber-nol! Lobcock! Oaf! Grub! Pigface! Wittol! Botch! Slubberdegullion!"

At which point the bench very properly interposed.

Pass we into a politer atmosphere. There remains one other species of name-calling which is open to cavil. I allude, Miss Capulet, to that description of name or title which seems to imply power, grandeur, or distinction, and may really mean no such thing. Permit me at least to know what I am worshipping. If I chat with a duke, I think I would rather know he is a duke. I like dukes. By far the greater part of the dukes with whom I am on terms of intimacy are amazingly good fellows. There is no mistake about *them*. Of what, however, were we talking? Dubious titles, inexpressive official distinctions, and the like. Do you know, for instance, what is a Woodward, a Verderer, a Regarder? Of course not: any more than you could explain the terms "Stablestand," "Dogdraw," "Backbear," and "Bloodyhand," which several aspects of poaching passed into oblivion with the forest craft which produced the Woodward. These had meanings once, but they and their significance are gone. Why, however, should we perpetuate names that have not, and never had, a meaning at all—or, if they *have*, leave it in obscurity?

That extraordinary appointment, in the gift of the Crown, the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds, an office which has the additional peculiarity of being perpetually accepted, and in no instance resigned, is a case in point. What are this steward's duties? Where and when does he perform them?

Take again, for example, the groomship of the Stole. What is the Stole? Bad grammar only? Something or somebody embezzled, or misappropriated, diverted from public uses? Why does it need grooming? And, further,

why do we, the public, provide the currycomb wherewith this well-paid groom grooms what is stolen or "stole" from ourselves? Imagine a gentleman, who has bolted with your cob, sending in his bill for six months' care and keep!

Once more. Clerk to the Stannaries. Who upon earth *are* the Stannaries? and why the definite article? Is it a family? There is a friendly and familiar accent in the name that favours this conjecture. Yet I don't know any subject that has caused me more anxious speculation. But for the casual remark of a young Cornish friend of mine, who said, in his careless way, that it had something to do with tin, I should not have known that enormous wealth compelled this fortunate family to employ a clerk. Yet, why should it be regarded in the light of a public office? What did old Stannary do, that his private revenues should be so jealously guarded by the State, to the extent of appointing their own officer to look after them? Again, Miss Capulet—But here's Montague! I take my leave.

OLD, NEW, AND NO MUSIC.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I. A GERMAN FESTIVAL.

It may be worth while—for those, at least, who do not share Swift's contempt for "the fiddlers" and their "fine stuff," but rather nourish their sympathies for a beautiful art, under the more genial sanction of a Shakespeare or a Milton—to stand still for a moment, and attempt to form some idea as to what England's gains in the matter of music have been during the past quarter of a century. This can hardly be accomplished without illustrating by comparison. If comparison show loss on the part of other countries, the result gives no ground for the vulgarities of personal triumph, howbeit it may point out sunken rocks we should do well to avoid—paths not to be entered without the certainty of fatigue, loss of patience, and loss of strength. The writer was, not long ago, driven on such a retrospect—on such expedients for testing progress—by a couple of striking experiences, which occurred within the compass of three weeks: the experiences of a German and of an English musical festival.

When the writer began to frequent meetings of the kind—more than a quarter of a century since—two of the great schools of European art had little, if at all, passed their prime. Italy's greatest operatic composer—Signor Rossini—had only just ceased to produce, and the works of Donizetti and Bellini (both in full activity) were all but unknown to our public. Great singers crossed the Alps to us from Milan, and Venice, and Naples. Matters were in an even more satisfactory state in Germany, regarding the art and literature of which country English admiration then stood at its highest point. Beethoven had not long passed away, leaving a treasury of his music complete and incomplete still to be unsealed for us. Weber was carrying England

by storm with the supernatural fascinations and "flattering" melodies (as Mendelssohn called them) of his Freischütz. The rich sedateness of Spohr still passed for something as profound as it was individual. People clambered on the roof of St. Andrew's Hall at Norwich to hear his oratorio through the windows, unable to find a place within the building. Prescient amateurs, who do not wait till originality is crowned by success, were looking out for the prodigious boy, Mendelssohn, whose *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture is possibly the most extraordinary piece of early promise existing in music. The day of the disinterment of Bach had not come, but our passion for Mozart was then, as now, in its way, as much of a religion as our reverence for Handel. In short, we lived and listened, and gave a blank credit to everything, past and present, that came from a certain land, without any closer wish to discriminate than belongs to implicit hero-worship. And had any one, then, whispered a prophecy of downfall or decay, or suggested that the germs of these might even then be traced in the midst of musical productions tempting to the enterprising by their originality, and to the vain, because of their difficulty of comprehension, as compared with the more fluent and spontaneous music of Italy—he would have been hooted down by all the "elect and precious" as a flimsy trifler, incapable and unworthy of understanding and receiving the highest and most profound pleasures which Poetry can give.

England's faith in German music, at that time, if excessive, was sincere, and justified by the state of matters at home. What have been the facts of the case since those days? The great school of instrumental writing has received no healthy development in Germany, while the art of singing, which largely includes the culture of melody, has been allowed to fall into a state of dilapidation which could only have a bad result, as lowering the standard of one material used in musical composition.

In the early days of German art—when Bach, by way of holiday, used to go to Dresden to hear "the pretty songs"—when Handel passed into Italy, to smoothé himself without laying down a whit of his northern manliness, by making acquaintance with the treasures of Beauty in the south—when Haydn (pupil of another Italian, the rugged Porpora) professedly ripened and refined every theme he treated—when Mozart exhibited the most completely-balanced combination of charm, invention, and learning, we have ever seen,—there was no thought of antagonism, no dream of such a folly as that form could only be vindicated by neglect of colour, still less that, without having form or colour, a vaporous and confused concoction should, because of its scale or its singularity, pass as a great poem only to be relished by the profound and the far sighted. Yet these follies have been adopted and preached and fanatically pushed to their extreme consequences in the world of modern German music.

The stirrings of this folly—taking the form

of a spurious nationality—the introduction into an art which has an universal language, of contradictions, defiance, renunciations, as so many precepts and principles,—in Germany originated with Beethoven, and were largely shaped and forwarded by the personality and the misfortunes of that sublime poet. He fell "on the thorns of life," if ever artist did. He had little, if any, home training; he was born with a spirit at once colossally generous, and rugged, and jealous; he hardly became aware of the privileges as a ruler and a discoverer, which his good genius had given him, before he was touched by palsy—to such a man more terrible than violent death. He had hardly wakened to his consciousness, that immense and unknown combinations were at his command, when it was also made clear to him that the power of testing these by experience (invaluable to a musician beyond every other artist) was steadily decaying. A thoroughly disciplined mind might have mastered even this calamity; but Beethoven's was not a thoroughly disciplined mind, and no help was ministered to him by the by-standers—his patrons of quality—his rapacious kinsfolk. He was in advance of his time, he was in advance of his patrons, and he only followed the law of weak human nature—apt to mistake suffering for injustice, and to fancy inevitable neglect persecution—in finding relief for his unhappiness in the defiance of fashion and precedent and protest, and in pushing advance too far and too lawlessly towards chaos.

The mischief which such an example, left by such a man, can do to idle dreamers and theorists (showing, nevertheless, the most wondrous patience for collecting details), can hardly be estimated in this practical shop-keeping England of ours. It might be hard to the verge of impossibility, to emulate the vigour and spirit of idea to be found in every one of Beethoven's compositions, be they as full of diffuseness, confusion, and crudity, as his *Posthumous Quartets* and his *Second Mass*, but it was easy, because he broke bounds, for his idolators to defend such licences as so many bold and beautiful enlargements of a domain narrowed by Pedantry. Yet to adhere to established forms without becoming tiresome, demands as much cultivated intelligence as reverence—to break proportion and harmony in pieces—to represent ugliness and discord as new oracles, from whose sayings those superior to common superstitions could alone derive real inspiration—requires no thought, no training, no power of really appreciating what is beautiful and holy. Then it was found in Germany new and noble to represent music as something which music never was and never will be—an expression of political feelings—of metaphysical definitions—of the yearning anguish of the present—of enlightened contempt for the past—of a defiant and exclusive nationality, frowning at one country, scowling at another, sneering at a third, ignoring a fourth. It was held as divine of an artist to be morose, uncomplying, unkempt,—not

to win, but to force his way: to insult taste into that sort of terrified silence which despotism mistakes for sympathy—to mystify those who are appalled at sounding words, by a liberal use of the jargon of solemn nonsense. That all these cheap and easy innovations were provoked by the mechanical phlegm of a set of manufacturers, who, in Germany more than in any other musical country, in their works substituted letter for spirit, ad nauseam, is not to be questioned by any one who has glanced at the bales of waste paper that fill the music-publishers' warehouses.

Considering the flaws and specks in Beethoven's latest music as the starting-point of the movement, the first name among those moderns who have helped in German music to confound good and evil, is that of Robert Schumann: a dreamy heavy bewildered man, not without generous aspirations, and a satisfactory amount of scientific preparation, but whom clearness of purpose and vision seem to have largely forsaken whenever the work in hand was one of any length or importance, and in whom the instinct for Beauty seems to have been extraordinarily weak. That man shall run the risk of being pilloried as a malevolent bigot, who shall venture in certain German circles (and these made up of intelligent and sincere persons) to declare that very little of the mass of music bearing Schumann's name has any real value, save those slight trifles thrown off for children and young persons at an early period of his career, which he lived to disown with transcendental contempt. Want of freshness in idea, want of simplicity in treatment, a resolute determination to be eccentric (that most commonplace of follies), a lumbering uncouthness where animation was aimed at, affectation where tenderness and pathos might have been looked for—these characteristics, with more or less mitigation, distinguished Schumann's symphonies, his cantatas, his overtures, all, in short, of his compositions on an extended scale. His songs, which are in high favour with those who are advanced in cloudy connoisseurship, are stale, strained, and sickly, as compared with the best by Schubert, and Mendelssohn, and Lindblad the Swede (the last far too little known in England). In his pianoforte music, such real fancy as it contains is confined to the titles of the pieces. As for affording the player on the instrument any scope for special display, that, of course, was too base and trivial a concession for a high-minded transcendentalist to stoop to. Yet this was the musician for whose sake the composer of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* music, and of St. Paul, and Elijah, and the Italian and Scottish symphonies, and the *Antigone* choruses, was, almost before he was cold in his grave, decried as having been shallow, superficial, amiably worldly (Mendelssohn, worldly!), an artist with a factitious reputation fast wearing out, totally incapable of depicting the anxiety of the great German mind, or expressing the honourable determination after unity at home (implying

antagonism and antipathy for the stranger without its gates), which it is the privilege and mission of the German art of the nineteenth century to display and to develop. Nothing can be much more curious to the English stranger who is not prepared to "stand and deliver," because the giant in his path (but half seen) has a false air of bravado, and a real disproportionate over-awing ugliness, than to study the tone of enthusiastic idolatry in which the music of Schumann has been treated in the journals, and in the schools, and in the societies, of Germany.

There was no want of persons eager to follow up or partake in the work of musical destruction, consciously or unconsciously began by Schumann—to throw form to the winds, to instil discord on the throne of harmony, to be mystical in defence of "inner meaning," and that "concealed melody," which speaks to none save the initiated. One of these persons merits a separate mention. Though Richard Wagner be living, this mention may be made without indelicacy, since never did man court notoriety for himself and his system more importunately—more audaciously, it might be added—than he has done, in word and in deed. That he was endowed by nature with a certain wild talent and ambition, dangerously approaching genius, his most systematic detractors cannot deny. That he fell on life in the midst of a period of upheaving and confusion—analogueous to that which produced what Goethe called "the literature of despair" in modern France—is no less evident. After a few constrained attempts at conformity with the fashions of the day—his opera of *Rienzi* showing unmistakable traces of the influence of Meyerbeer—it seems to have become clear to Herr Wagner, that, as an orderly citizen in the world of art, he could only hold a second-rate and imitative place; whereas noise and stir, power to injure, and, haply, power to gain, were to be got out of open rebellion. Accordingly, he snatched up the besom of destruction, and began to "thrash about" with it (to borrow an American phrase) so violently, that the soberest people could not avoid turning their heads to inquire into the cause of the hubbub. He turned one real quality, possessed by him beyond most of his comrades, to account, with excellent adroitness. Think what we may of his music, as poor in contrivance, meagre in melody, stale, inflated, tedious, reminding the ear (as was well said by a wit) of a concert of "broken crockery," rather than of "harp, and pipe, and symphony," there is no denying to Herr Wagner the possession of poetical power, not common to the writers of opera-books. In appreciation of what is lyrical and picturesque in national legend, he is excellent. He has the divining-rod, let him have misused it ever so flagrantly, as his later opera-books unfortunately prove. His first trial of it may be said to have been made in the *Flying Dutchman*, the opera by him which followed *Rienzi*, and which he brought (words and music) to Paris some years ago. The Parisian powers recognised the bold

originality of the play, but would have nothing to do with the bold atrocity of the music. And so, the book of the Flying Dutchman was bought for the Grand Opera; to be reset by M. Dietsch, then a chorus-master, of whom hopes were entertained as a composer. The adventure had no success; the Flying Dutchman and M. Dietsch went to the bottom; but in Germany, with Herr Wagner's original music, the opera still floats; and one portion of it, the Spinning Song of the heroine, with chorus, is beautiful.

It was by his Tannhäuser, however, that Herr Wagner may be said to have crossed the barricades, so far as the music of Germany is concerned, and to have entered its opera world as a conqueror. The story, though virtually the old legend of the conflict of Spirits versus Sense, Christianity against Paganism, of Roland breaking loose from the enchantments of Armida, and though marred by a tremendously tedious monologue in the last act (a narration of a penitent's journey to Rome, including all that the Pope preached to the penitent), has vigour, pathos, and a certain chivalric elegance, as put into words by Herr Wagner. The legend, with its scenery, and the partisanship, for better for worse, attracted to its author, not merely saved the unlovely music, but, by its enchantment, intoxicated a large section of a great people, to rate the opera, as Herr Wagner rates it.

Flushed with the success of Tannhäuser, out strode Herr Wagner, resolute to demolish all stage music previously existing, and he put forth a self-glorification, in the form of an essay, which is quite amazing. His book, *Oper und Drama*, in its tone of shallow disparagement of the great men of the past, even exceeded the talk of Crabbe's Learned Boy, when he laid down the law as under:

I, myself, began
To feel disturb'd, and to my Bible ran,
I now am wiser—yet agree in this,
The book has things that are not much amiss;
It is a fine old work, and I protest
I hate to hear it treated as a jest.

Yet Herr Wagner's insolent book, and the music, in which he illustrated his theory by his practice, for a time, cowed honest Germany; imposed on timid Germany; and encouraged ignorant Germany. The opera by him which followed Tannhäuser, his *Lohengrin*, produced some fifteen years ago, was thought by many—is thought by a few—to have set him still more firmly in his seat as a discoverer. But such hold as Herr Wagner's two operas have got in Germany, is largely to be ascribed to Dr. Liszt; the most brilliantly gifted, the most universally accomplished, the most nobly endowed, of pianists, "all and sundry;" a man who must have made his way into any world of action, or of art, if even he had not been gifted with a memory which nothing can shake, with a technical power such as no rival can approach; a man, withal, whose compositions prove him to be poor, not in determination, not in science, but in idea. The excuse for poverty

in musical imagination lay ready at hand, in Herr Wagner's pretensions. Of this, Dr. Liszt, as the advocate of a persecuted musician, availed himself, and accordingly for a time Germany was flooded with tales of the popularity of Herr Wagner as the continuer—what do I say?—as the extinguisher of Beethoven; as the prophet (not to give him the higher title which our neighbours rather recklessly fling about) of music in Germany.

Let us hope that the mischief done by the movement hastily outlined, will, fifty years hence, seem like a fever dream past and gone. Yet the extent to which taste and reverence have been demoralised in a country once so rich and great, is to be seen in the career of the generation of young artists of promise, whether creative or executive, who have been seduced by the false doctrines so easy to preach and to recommend, and so specious in the noise they make. The one or two who are not incurably spoiled (judging them by their writings) are so seriously warped, that as adults who have cut some figure in the revolution, they must needs go to school under the old teachers of form and order, if they would really prosper. However, since the production of *Lohengrin*, some of the warmest disciples of Herr Wagner have slunk out of his church, others have openly recanted, and those who remain have no coherent fellowship in any fixed principle of art or action, save in ridiculous mutual praise. A wondrous proof of this was given, a few weeks ago, at Carlsruhe, where a Festival, avowedly to produce music of the Future and no other Music, was held.

A stranger meeting cannot be imagined. In the first place, the disorder of all the preliminary proceedings was as great as if the scene had been a midland county in England, and the committee one convened to do honour to an immortal poet. Preliminary advertisement there was none; by the aid of a heavy correspondence, an inquisitive Londoner could just worm out the date at which the apostles of the Future were to strike terror into all and sundry believers in the Past—but nothing more. When he arrived close to the scene of action, discovery became yet more difficult. At Baden-Baden, a town in daily and near communication (both courtly and popular) with Carlsruhe, no one could tell him anything, save that the game of Sixes and Sevens was in active rehearsal: every one having quarrelled with every one else. The tree at the end of the Lichtenthal Alley (every one knows that spot for play and concert bills, which used to proclaim to the Baden idlers what were to be the entertainments of the day in both towns) was mysteriously dumb. When the day arrived, a visit to this strangely mute and undemonstrative Festival, reminded one whimsically of a lost adventure from the life of the Sleeping Beauty, supposing that charming and charmed princess to have slumbered in the palace which forms the centre of that fan-shaped town—the rivet, so to say, from which all its streets radiate.

Carlsruhe is habitually empty: a place in which a strange carriage amounts to an event: where the very soldiers strutting down the street seem to be the identical soldiers we recollect to have strutted there a quarter of a century ago. Solemn civil deliberation and bad cookery are the rule of the inns; in the shops it seems a point of honour not to get beyond last year's novelties. But on those bright days of this autumn, when the united musicians of the Future came together to shame Germany, Carlsruhe looked even more penitentially dejected, and genteelly faded, than usual. There were few expecting strangers in the street, there was no bustling of arrival, there were no pretty women in fresh toilettes, there was no smartening up, no display, beyond the demonstrative appearance of a few resident elderly gentlemen in white cravats (at seven in the morning), button-hole ribbons, and spectacles, charging the staircases of the hotels—and a pretty liberal assortment of youths, got up in a close imitation of Dr. Liszt's long hair, Dr. Liszt's shoulders, and Dr. Liszt's walk.

But the Music of the Future, when, at last, it was reached—what of that? The lowest expectations could not have been disappointed by the Music of the Future which was presented. It consisted chiefly of instrumental works; it being not the least promising symptom of this new German school, that the voice is to be gradually elbowed out of the orchestra. Uhland's noble ballad of the Singer's Curse, the Lament of Tasso, what not, were all to be expressed by the full band, or the nimble fingers of the pianist—and there *was* one young pianist there, Fräulein Topp, whose nimbleness of finger, command of the instrument, and memory, shown in the execution of music of a most cruel, harassing, and dismal ugliness, were marvellous. Throughout all this portentous music, the ear listened in vain for a solitary trait of melody natural or unnatural, for a single new or masterly orchestral combination—for anything bearing the remotest resemblance to sound of hope or promise. Almost the only outbreak of common sense and intelligible composition which relieved two long morning, and as many evening performances, was the final movement of a psalm by the Arch-Iconoclast, Dr. Liszt—a fugue, as sober, sensible, tuneable, and well conducted, as though the most pedantic of the dowagers whom these great spirits got together to destroy and to drive into the outer darkness of oblivion—had penned it!

The execution of this dreadful music was in a large measure worthy of the compositions. The Carlsruhe orchestra, which is a very good one, and well conducted (as a performance of Glück's *Armida* had given the writer occasion to know), had been largely reinforced by strangers, and the force thus made up did not work harmoniously.

Then the labour to bring together something shapely out of chaotic rubbish was found so exhausting, that (no wonder!) the players became dispirited and mutinous. A duet from a manuscript opera, some three-quarters of an hour long, in which Diana has to sing some four pages of transcendental text, brought matters to a crisis. After rehearsing this for upwards of a couple of hours, the band fairly threw down their instruments. They, being mortals of the Present, could bear no more Music of the Future that day, and accordingly the duet was given up, and the concert postponed.

But one yet more depressing feature of this German Festival remains to be mentioned—the vainglory of the audience. The audience assembled in the beautiful theatre at Carlsruhe (a place of amusement, the scale, proportions, and convenience of which claim admiration) was as vehement in its raptures throughout the terrible events of every evening, as if a new Bach, or Handel, or Beethoven, had been revealed in every composition. The climax was reached in the applause with which the enthusiasts overwhelmed Herr Reményi, who committed Murder on Herr Joachim's Hungarian violin concerto. This gentleman's display was from first to last terribly out of tune, and in it not one passage was really rendered, though all were dashed off with the jerks, and gestures, and bowings of the body, and flinging back of the hair, which made good people thirty years ago in the caricatures of Paganini in our Christmas pantomimes. Yet Paganini or Ernst, when both were in their prime, or Herr Joachim the admirable (happily still playing his best), or Mademoiselle Lind, or Mademoiselle Patti, or any real and popular marvel in any branch of art, could not have been greeted with more numerous and frenetic recalls and plaudits than this performer. Well might an English guest inquire if he were in the music-land of Germany, when his senses were outraged by enthusiasm so preposterous; but if he shaped his inquiry into speech or comment, he was answered by the polite piece of information that an Englishman *could* know nothing of the matter, *could not* fathom the deep feeling and the inner life of this splendid regeneration of German music, illustrated in perfect tune and execution, by so transcendent an artist!

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BY CHARLES DICKENS.

IN TWENTY MONTHLY PARTS.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER XXV. NEWS FROM HOME.

ON the night of the festival, the young ladies Fermor took a long while to dress. Lady Laura had finished her dressing early, as she always did, and her gaunt worn figure was hung with rich stuffs, just as they hang the aged stones of Temple-bar on a royal visit to the City. She was sitting waiting with her relation, dressed also, and they were both discussing Charles.

The English mail had been late, and was just brought in. A small despatch for the diplomatist, which he flung himself upon and tore with his talons; two or three ladylike letters for the family, in shape like enlarged visiting-cards. One was in Fermor's writing, and had his name written boldly outside, with an official air.

"A letter from Charles," said Lady Laura, with something like enthusiasm; "now we shall see what he is to do."

"Well," said Sir Hopkins, glancing over the letter he had also received, "that is so far satisfactory. Old Seymour is likely to go—to move on, as he should have done long ago. What did I tell you? I know how to deal with these sort of people. Well, what does Mr. Charles say?"

The answer was something like a scream. The tall gaunt woman, in all her finery, had fallen back on the sofa. For a moment he thought she was in a fit, but he was well accustomed to the Waipiti cries and war-dances. With true diplomatic instinct, he went over on tiptoe—for which there was no need—and closed the door softly. He was more alarmed about the letter, for he was sure that Charles was dying or dead.

The next moment she had started into a sort of galvanic life. "Think of it!" she said, "only think of him; it is dreadful, isn't it? O, that such a blow should come upon me!"

Sir Hopkins made attempts to secure the letter for his own reading, but she was brandishing it hysterically. "Gambled," thought the diplomatist, "and lost every sixpence. Shan't pay a florin for him, though."

"Such a disgrace to bring on us all! He must be mad. Does he want to ruin us? What have we done to him that he should degrade us in this way? One blow after another!

I am sure we had troubles enough of our own without that!"

Again the diplomatist tried ineffectually for the letter. "Married an innkeeper's daughter," he thought, bitterly. "A fool! I have done with him. Let me see what he writes, Laura."

"You know," she said, swaying herself back and forward, "what we reckoned on from him! You know how we talked, and what we were to make of him. Now that these girls have failed so wretchedly, he was the only thing we had to look to. And the air with which he writes it to me, as if he were getting a princess!"

"It is the innkeeper's daughter," thought the diplomatist; and she now let him take the letter. He got out his silver double glass, which hung about his neck like an amulet, and read it carefully.

It was our friend's skilful composition, breaking the news of his proceedings. It is plain that he had sadly miscalculated its effect. Carefully worded as it was, it had not made this raging mother and cold diplomatist see the thing in the light he fancied it would. He thought his words were sure to be as soothing as drops of camphor julep. Poor Fermor! so much rhetoric expended like blank cartridges.

Lady Laura waited while the diplomatist read, her sunk flattened chest heaving outwards like a decayed wall about to fall in. Into her worn and faded cheek colour had actually forced its way, a visitor long estranged. Sir Hopkins read through Fermor's philosophical composition. The embossed and initialed document began:

(C.F.)

"My dear Mother,—I wish to communicate a little matter which I dare say may surprise you. Not that there is anything astonishing in what I am about to do, for it is a step which I and every man, who proposes seriously to take his proper station in the commonwealth, must eventually take. The idea, my dear mother, of a long life spent selfishly in administering to oneself, in doing nothing for others, and, above all, the notion of leaving no more mark of one's path behind than if it were made on the sea, this is what I never could bear to look forward to. I shrink from it, and always have shrunk from it. Your true gentleman will live for others as well as for himself, and will bequeath his name in trust to

those who have a legitimate interest in guarding it free from speck or stain.

"In these views, I write to say I am about to marry. Ordinary boys would, of course, dilate on the charms of the person I have chosen. I know you too well to indulge in rhapsodies of that kind. But this much I may say: she will be no discredit to our family. She is a Miss Manuel, of a half-Spanish family. I think her charming; but she will make an excellent wife, which is the point to look at. I do not enter into details now, as it is so late (or early, perhaps), but I lose no time in communicating to you news of this important step, which I almost *assume* you will approve of. You shall hear again to-morrow.

"Your affectionate Son,
"CHARLES FERMOR."

"Well?" said Lady Laura, eagerly, when he had done. "Is it not charming news? It is deplorable! But I give up. I can't go on any more. I am sick and weary of the whole business. Let them all do as they please. Marry out of the street if they will." (Poor Alicia Mary, and Blanche! offers from any direction would be welcome!) And the veteran lady, utterly beaten and baffled, seemed to bend up and collapse physically, just as all her hopes had done already.

The diplomatist got to the end of it much relieved, yet there was a shade of disappointment on his face at his divination having broken down. The penetration that had pierced to the bottom of the savage nature of the Waipitis, was infallibly certain as to the innkeeper's daughter. He shook his head slowly at it, as if it were the water-trough of his cage, then laid his head on one side, then on the other.

"Stupid fellow!" he said at last, tranquilly; "I thought he had more sense."

"And what shall we write to him," said Lady Laura, suddenly standing up, very fiercely. "Write to him and tell him never to come into my presence again? To tramp round, he and his low wife, from barrack to barrack until they starve! Not one farthing shall he ever have from me again! And I conjure you, Cousin Pocock, to promise me that you will never let him have a sixpence of yours." For certainly a dozen years back Lady Laura Fermor had never been so excited.

Sir Hopkins was smiling to himself all this while. An idea had struck him. He seemed to have on his diplomatic uniform, its collar of deal board and all. His eyes twinkled as he thought of this prospect.

"Never see him again," he said. "We shall see him very often, I hope. No, no, things are not so bad. I don't take this gloomy view at all. A skilful negotiator would very soon restore the status quo ante."

"You don't know him," said Lady Laura. "He is so proud and stubborn. He will never listen to reason."

"Except to his own," said the diplomatist. "The most suitable disposition in the world, for

working on. I recollect the old Waipiti chief—"

"Yes, yes," said Lady Laura, a little impatiently. "But it will be no use, I tell you, speaking or writing to him. As an infant, he was the same; as a boy, he was the same; as a young man, he was the same; he will always be the same. Let him take his own way. What does it matter? They talk of those women that make the shirts; but what has my life been? All disappointments and trouble, crossed in every way. I can do nothing with any of them, so I give it up now."

"That's the way with you women," said he, rubbing his hands, and looking into the stove; "you give up when we begin. This poor foolish Charles! Never mind, we shall see what can be done to-morrow. Ah! here we come at last!" and the girls came "swelling" in, like two yachts, with all their finery spread, and a maid coasting behind with a spare sail or so on her arm.

They did not notice their mother's shrunk and woful face; there were some final touches to be given. In the carriage she broke out with the story that night's mail had brought her. "Your brother is making a fine fool of himself! Go to somebody—I wish to Heaven you would—and leave me here. I am sick of you all. I am sick of the world. I have done what I could for you, and I am tired and exhausted. Only just let him write me one of his hypocritical letters when he wants money! I, that have always scraped, and pinched, and denied myself, to keep him up in his proper station!"

It was a dismal progress in that dark carriage. The girls had been a little excited by this party, though indeed, by this time, it should have been as monotonous as parade or drill. This news came on them with a chill, and made the opera-cloaks on their shoulders feel like palls. Their hearts felt tight even under the stiff silk armour, which the maid Maria had tightened with many struggles. Suddenly came the lights and the music of the "dance," seen and heard through the open drawing-room. As though the fashionable sergeant had called out "Attention," they fell into regular line, fans were "ordered," smiles and general happiness mounted to their faces; they bent, and swayed, shook kid-covered hands, were so glad, and so sorry, and so alarmed at being late; and were so smiling and delighted, that the idea was somehow inspired, that by impediments they had been long kept away from this delicious retreat; that they had given their jailers the slip, and were now finally got to the place for which their souls had yearned. They had put on their smiles with their gloves. The ugly family nightmare—just heard of—they thrust down, and shut the lid up, though it would fly open at times in the midst of a valse, like a jack-in-the-box. Lady Laura Fermor "taken down" for an ice by Shafto Lyons, M.P., who was getting his chest "shored up" at Nice, was rallied by her in the gayest manner, on a

rumour of marriage. He was a tall florid old bachelor, very red, and much tightened about the throat, and, as he looked at her sideways with relish and admiration, his collar and necktie seemed to fit about his throat as a frill of paper does about a ham. In one of her laughs of appreciation the box flew open, and the sight of the "jack" almost sobered her, but she had him wired down in a second.

So, too, with her daughters. They ambled round in a galop and valse: the elder in the arms of a "delightful French officer," with a figure like an hour-glass. So with her sister, who did a little quiet unostentatious work with a young English gentleman. They went apart from the world, and opened a little "store" in a greenhouse among the plants. Stupid single men who knew nobody, blundered on them here—in the desert as it were—and hastily retreated, mentally whistling.

It came to the end when Lady Laura sounded the "rappel." Then came the gush of farewell smiles, general delight and grief: an evening to look back to. Shafto Lyons, M.P., took out Lady Laura, and looked fondly after her out of his paper ham frill, as she drove away. She shook her fan at him with gay menace. But when he was in the supper-room telling Fobley what "a fine woman" he had just taken out, all the springs had relaxed, and the "fine woman's" face had sunk, and dropped, and fallen into hollows. Not a word was spoken during that mourning-coach progress.

That very night, before she went to bed (a form she went through from habit), Lady Laura got out her desk and wrote to her son all in fact that had passed through her mind that night. He was to take his own way—ruin himself if he pleased, ruin them, ruin everybody. By all means take his own way. She was sick of the whole business. God knows, she had had a weary time of it with the whole set. However, this she begged, that he would never trouble her by letter or otherwise. In short, a hot passionate denunciation. She then read it over with satisfaction, as though she were delivering it to him in person, and went to bed. In the morning, when Sir Hopkins came, she took him aside privately, and showed it. "There," she said, "it will be a satisfaction to my mind to have sent him that."

He read it smiling, sat down, talked with her a good hour, discharged a Waipiti cartridge now and again, and finally wrote a short note, which she copied. It ran:

Nice.

"My dear Charles,—Your letter was indeed a surprise. I hope you have not been a little hasty. However, if you are irretrievably committed, you must of course go through with it. You shall see us before long, as the air of this place somehow does not suit Alicia Mary. I shall let you know when we shall be in London, where I hope you will try and meet us.

"Your affectionate Mother,
"LAURA FERMOR."

CHAPTER XXVI. AN INVITATION.

THE lectures on Roger le Garçon were suspended by more absorbing matter. Fermor virtually put up "Relâche" at his door. His head was full of the incidents of his new dignity; every one was carrying up, as it were, Addresses to the Throne, and he had to deliver Gracious Replies. His hands, too, were full enough, and he was very busy in the mornings writing prettily-turned notes to many acquaintance, male and female, and the turn was sometimes sad, sometimes humorous. "You will be concerned, dear Mrs. Fazakerly," he wrote, "to hear of my approaching dissolution." Which little metaphor, worked pleasantly to the bottom of the first page, was a humorous specimen. "You have always, dear Miss Biddulph, felt such an interest in anything that concerns my happiness, I cannot let a post go by without, &c." This was the serious and plaintive style.

He was busy in this way one morning, some ten days after Major Carter's party, when his door was opened, and his cast-iron neighbour, cast-iron rod in hand, swung in—as a crane swings round—close on the servant, who would have announced him. "Sit down, Mr. Carlay," said Fermor, affably; "I am glad to see you."

"And I am glad to hear you say so," said the other. "I was thinking something had been done to offend you."

"Quite gratuitous," said Fermor, "I must say. I hope there has been nothing in my conduct which a gentleman would not sanction. O! you are thinking of my unexplained absence? I see! Ah, there were reasons for that. I must tell you," continued he, with something like a simper. "By the way, Miss Carlay—I hope she is improving?"

"Better, thank you," said the other, rising suddenly. "I am not a man for seeing the world, or for managing it, and have no wish to learn how; therefore, if I do things in a rough abrupt fashion of my own, you must excuse me."

"Certainly, certainly," said Fermor, smiling. "I have knocked about the world a pretty good time, and am used to that kind of thing."

"Because, if you would not mind taking us as we are, in the backwoods, as I may say, and putting up with roughness—in short, would you dine with us to-day?"

Fermor started. This was a true surprise. But in a moment he saw the secret springs that were working. It was very, very odd. This was always to be the result of his presence. He had not intended to be more than gentle manly—in his common manner—he had not, indeed. Could he help it?

Of a sudden he became gracious and courtly. He would have the *greatest* pleasure. He really liked that sort of thing, no fuss, or state; "provided," added Fermor, "you treat me as—one of the family, mind. There, at the mess, they have got a Frenchman, who lived with Count Walewski. I believe, in his own line, he is worth his weight in gold; but, on my word and

honour," Fermor added, earnestly, "I would sooner sit down to a mutton-chop—a well-done mutton-chop—and a pint of sherry."

With this little profession of faith, which he threw in gratuitously, he sent away his visitor. Through the day he thought pleasantly over the prospect, and laid himself out to amuse them by some new phenomena of his personality. He dressed himself with effect, set a freshly-pulled gentleman's bouquet in his coat, and at the fixed hour he and his *ro eyw* ascended the stairs together, and were announced.

He was astonished to see what an elegant looking room it was, and to find that the furniture was not of rude cast-iron, nor of unhewn wood. Miss Carlay was there, but not as in the garden propped up with pillows. Almost as soon as he had shaken hands, Fermor had started with his graceful garrulity.

"I can see a marked improvement," he said. "I am not at all surprised. The doctors, you know, are beginning to send people here. I find myself better. I am one of those people that feel every breath of air. In fact, I am an animated barometer, a human aneroid." As soon as he entered, Mr. Carlay, in a grim dinner coat cut out of sheet iron, and new black trousers like short lengths of an iron water-main, had drawn off, and was walking up and down at the other end of the room. In Miss Carlay a faint tinge of colour, and the manner which is peculiar to delicacy, made her appear very interesting to Fermor.

They went down to dinner. A small round table, a little graceful silver, a little glass, as graceful in shape and pattern, and flowers. No iron ore, as Fermor had almost expected. It was surprising. Everything was good and tasteful, and hot; with a bottle of champagne too, Fermor's favourite wine. He was much pleased, became much surprised, and to reward them put spurs to the *ro eyw*. "By the way," he said, "I have a little bit of news, which I dare say will take you by surprise. Perhaps it is no news, and perhaps you have heard it; and perhaps, again, it is not worthy of the name of news, and you would not care to hear it." He waited for deserved applause for this ingenious way of putting the thing, and got it.

The young lady welcomed everything he said; not indeed with words, but with silence, which to him was golden, and, therefore, far better.

"I am going to be married," he said, looking round and smiling.

Mr. Carlay gave a grim and sudden jerk, which in another would have been a start. Fermor, who had his eye on the daughter, saw, to his real astonishment, a flutter—not a start—and colour. He had had the idea that he was giving them what the French call "a good mouth," and that, at the news, there should be illuminations generally, in all directions.

"Yes," said Fermor, speaking of himself as of another person, and as if he were helpless in the hands of some one else. "The thing, I believe, is appointed for every one, like death—it is only a question of time. My dissolution has been coming on a long time: so I only

wrap my robe gracefully about my head, and fall down pierced with many wounds."

But he could not but observe the confusion his sudden news had caused. Miss Carlay's eyes were on her plate, and she was making a pretence of eating very fast. For the rest of the time she scarcely spoke at all, and very early fled away. Her father rolled his eyes grimly, and gave out a word now and again, like the sound of rusty machinery in motion. But Fermor, in great spirits, let his talk whirl round like the fly-wheel of an engine; and perhaps the name of that fly-wheel was the *ro eyw*.

He said afterwards he never had such a dreadful duty cast on him as the struggling against the sense of that oppressive man, who would *not* talk. "I might as well have been in a room by myself," he said to Young Brett, "speaking to the épergne. Such a moody soul as it was." Finally, Mr. Carlay pushed back his chair roughly, and got up.

"Ah, join the ladies," said Fermor, washing his fingers, "or lady, eh?"

"We have ways of our own here," said the other, standing at the door. "We are early persons. We don't join the ladies, or carry out that sort of thing. My daughter is not nearly strong enough, so you will excuse us, please."

In fact, at that moment a maid came down with a message. Miss Carlay was not very well, and could not appear again. "You see," said Mr. Carlay, now in the hall. "We are not suited for company and its forms, and must take our chance of being considered behind the times. So——"

He had opened the hall door. Fermor felt himself, in fact, morally taken by the shoulders and put out. He went down the steps chafing. "This is but the usual thing," he said. "I own I deserve it. This comes of going down into a lower rank." Still, it was a grateful subject to think how oddly the news of his "happiness" had been received. That poor, soft, good-natured girl—it did seem as if it had overwhelmed her. As for her father, he was a common ploughman; but while he gave him up to the sword, he would mark a white cross on *her* door. In fact, he would go in and see her in the morning, encourage her, smoothe her soft hair (morally speaking), and console her.

The next morning, which was sunny and without a breath of air abroad, he looked out from his back window. The usual picture was not to be seen: neither the young girl, nor the arm-chair, nor the pillows, nor the maid holding the parasol like an Indian servant. Later in the day, he set his decorators and upholsterers to work, fitted himself up with great nicety, and went in to call. He had not lectured on Roger le Garçon for a long time.

"Miss Carlay in?" he said, almost passing the servant, as a matter of course. But he was told "No." (This maid was not of the class who thought him "a lovely young man.") He retired much disgusted, and took down all his fine hangings and upholstery. Two days after he

called again, feeling a strange longing to say something on Roger le Garçon, but was not admitted. Yet he had seen the young girl in the garden that morning. He was furious. It was all that low engine-driver, stoker, ploughman, anything, her father. That poor soft girl was tyrannised over, and could not resist. However, now he had a fair excuse for "cutting the whole concern—toute la boutique." The course on Roger le Garçon was suspended, and the lecturer himself "interdicted," like M. Renan. He had a little mental slate, and he wiped their names off with his sleeve.

Fermor had, indeed, laid out for himself the pleasant pastime of "forming Violet's mind." With this view he used to converse with her a good deal upon the phenomenon of his *own* mind. On this department of psychology he was very fluent. Violet, in a devotee attitude, with her soft eyes fixed on her master, tried hard to follow, and, curious to say, her lecturer seemed better pleased when he could *not* be followed than when he was suddenly halted and gently asked to explain. He did not, however, include the rest of the family in his lectures.

From the very first day after Major Carter's party, he had suddenly drawn the line, as he called it, erected strong barriers between the rest of the family and himself. "Though I take the daughter," he said, "I do not, on that account, marry the whole family. She is absorbed into ours. I don't want her to bring *them* with her. No! No!" And to her he said privately, "My dear Violet, you are charming, as of course, and what I think of you I have shown. But I must really protest against your relations—that is, against taking them en masse. It may be very well now, but I do sincerely hope they may be got to understand the footing we wish to have them on. Now I must say, coming home the other day and finding them all in a carriage at the door, and your brother in the hall—"

"Indeed," interrupted Violet, piteously (she somehow never could gain courage to call him Charles, and therefore never called him by *any* name), "*indeed* they meant it well, and Pauline and Louis were against it, but mamma said you would think it so rude if they did not call on you."

"And why," said Fermor, with a curious want of logic, "should they be so violently against so common an act of courtesy? To tell you the truth, my dear Violet, I don't like your brother, and you mustn't be angry with me for telling you."

"O no, no," said Violet.

"I can't help it, and I can't give a distinct reason for it, no more than I can for not liking cucumbers or beef, or any other of the strong things. *He* is the cucumber of your family," he added, smiling, and wishing to reward her attention by the present of a little jest.

She laughed and enjoyed it as she enjoyed everything he meant to be enjoyed.

"Now," said he, "suppose we go back to lessons."

That is to the personal psychology, and to the psychology they returned. He turned on a little jet, and the personal experiences began to flow on steadily.

"Many people say I have a cold manner, and further think, *because* I have a cold manner, I must be cold. Does it follow? The fact is, I don't care to be enthusiastic, at least not about everything. It's not my nature, and yet—perhaps it is. Perhaps I feel that if I were to give way to it I would become all enthusiasm, and froth away like a bottle of champagne left open accidentally. Now, what would *you* say?"

A dreadfully embarrassing question for the shy little witness under examination. And, indeed, any expert even would have found it hard to have extracted any plain positive theory out of Captain Fermor's contradictory speculation. Most likely he did not wish her, for he shook his head over her, smiling.

"No, no," he said. "It is not every one that can understand me. I am like a Chaldee manuscript. It would take years of patient labour to find the key." And so, with a hailstorm of "I, I, I," the personal narrative flowed on for twenty minutes more. Violet listened with soft and dilated eyes, trying hard to keep up with his broader stride, and, to say the truth, was a little fatigued. But all this while her mind was being "forned."

Young Brett, that good boy, had been in and out with him all through, the most faithful of faithful terriers. Fermor really began to like him, and once or twice shifted a dreadfully sarcastic "snub" on to the head of his own man. With a little adaptation it did just as well. Young Brett had been up and down to Town with mystery and meaning, and finally burst upon Fermor with a superb fire-arm, breech-loading, silver mounted, with needle and the rest of it, reposing, too, in a luxurious couch of green velvet, where it would be exceedingly warm during the winter nights. Poor child, he had the Indian notion about a weapon of this sort, and would have given all the skins, furs, and cowries he was worth for a rifle, and powder and shot, considering that human happiness, riches, comfort, and amusement, lay packed in a gun-case.

Fermor received this marriage offering in a very kindly manner, turning it over graciously, and, after a short inspection, ringing for his man to take it away into his bedroom. This was much from him. For presents *were* one of his grievances.

"People encumber you with them," he said; and one of his comic pocket definitions, which he often took out and handed round the company, was that of a Present. "Something you do not want, to be repaid by something you cannot afford. That is *my* idea," he said.

He took little Brett with him, as it were upon his staff, to see the Manuels pretty often, and sent that honest boy to them as often, when he was not in the vein to go himself. The family liked the sight of his white hair and his free speech. He secretly admired both, more

particularly the elder girl, who was "splendid, by Jove!" He would have liked to have given her a gun. He saw they liked hearing about Fermor, and "rattled" away vivaciously on that pleasant theme. He spoke of him always with the deepest reverence and pride. "I believe," he said, "I am about the only fellow he likes among them all. He never told me so, but I think so. O, he is wonderful! such knowledge of the world, such quietness, such ease. I would give anything" (the image of his favourite breech-loader rising before him) "to have something like it! He says it is training; that he has trained himself. O, it is wonderful! He can do what he likes with people," he went on. "There is an old cynic next door to him, with a daughter—I should be afraid to look at him with an opera-glass. But he has got round him: has the run of the house, I may say. O, it is wonderful."

The girls became interested. These were the times of the lectures upon Roger le Garçon.

"And who are these people?" said Pauline.

"O, a fellow like a tall schoolmaster. I know he scared me out of all my senses. But Fermor knows how to tame. He made Fermor dine with him the other day."

"And the daughter?" said Violet, anxiously.

"A nice soft creature, that sits in a chair," said Young Brett, rapturously, as if this last attitude were one of her virtues; "so delicate and gentle, and, by Jove! so grateful when Fermor goes in to see her. He does it very often," continued Young Brett, with great seriousness; "out of charity, like visiting the hospital, he says."

"Pauline, glancing nervously at her sister, changed the subject, by asking Young Brett how he liked his new gun; and presently Violet, making some vain attempts at doing her work, got up with an impetuous rustle, and fled to her room. Her sister knew these signs of trouble.

A quarter of an hour afterwards, Pauline found her in sore distress, with two red rims round her bright eyes. "O child, child!" said she. "I knew you would be fretting yourself with these trifles."

"I am a child," said the other, bursting out afresh, "and I can't help it. And he knows it, and treats me like one. O, Pauline, you were wise and I was foolish. He just thinks of me as he would of his little dog—just to amuse him for half an hour. O, I am beginning to be very miserable."

And there was anguish and despair, and the good sister applied the usual soothing lotions, and tranquillised her, as she alone had the power of doing, with the weak liniment of reason.

CHAPTER XXVII. A LITTLE HEART IN TROUBLE.

LATE in the afternoon arrived Fermor the splendid. He came to "form her mind." He noted the faint red rings and the remains of the dejection. He was soothing, and gallant, and encouraging. He comforted and petted with his noble and silvery accents. Her little soul

was burning in her to bring him gently to account, but she stood too much in awe of him, and shrank into low spirits. He freedzed down any hysterics in a second.

"A little frowardness," he thought. "Upon my word, I am sorry to see this. I must eradicate it gently but firmly. Violet," he said, gravely, "you are not in your usual spirits to-day, I fancy. No! You can't conceal anything from me. Somebody has put you out a little."

"No, no," said Violet, eagerly.

"My dear child, it is written there," he said, pointing to her face, "in text-hand. It is a great pity to let you really be put out by trifles, for in your little round of life you can only encounter trifles. Now, take me. In the larger tract of life through which I have to walk, what purgatory I should suffer if I let myself be disturbed. I might as well give up. Things must master me, or I must master things. I prefer the latter. You should make an exertion, Violet. It will come after a time."

Violet cast down her eyes, trembling a little. These "hortatives" always chilled.

"How will you face the world?" said Fermor.

"How will you rough it? for rough it we must, to a certain degree. Or I must rough it for both, I suppose," said Fermor, resignedly. "It will all come on my shoulders."

"O!" said Violet, sorrowfully, "I would not mind—that is, I would do—I mean—anything, if I only thought—that is—"

"Really," said Fermor. "I do not quite follow. Your English, Violet, is rather unconnected. You should try and throw your words into the form of a sentence."

"But—" began Violet, passionately; then stopped short, a little scared.

"Yes?" said Fermor, quite calmly, who thought as he walked home how he had played her skilfully, like a little perch at the end of his line. "Let us hear it."

"O, if I thought," said she again, becoming passionate, "that you really cared for me, and loved me! But you don't. Do you? Tell me now. Do you?"

Fermor was secretly pleased. She looked really beautiful at that moment. Her cheeks were glowing, her eyes glistening, as if a shower were about to fall, and there was an imploring air about her, an acknowledgment of superior power, and an entreaty for mercy.

"My poor child," said Fermor, very tenderly, "what have you got into your little head? Something foreign, I know. Come, tell me. I am not to be taken in, you know. Of course I like you," he added, graciously.

"And nobody else? Do you like nobody else?" she said, plaiting the corner of her dress like a little girl stopped and questioned in the street.

"No one else," said Fermor, a little surprised. "Why, of course not; at least, not in the same degree. These are very odd questions."

"I know, I know," she said, eagerly, "and I should not speak in this way. But you are so

run after, and are so clever, it is only natural people should ask you into their houses, and listen to you, whereas I am so foolish and so little sought, I have only *one* person to look to. I think of——"

The clouds on Fermor's face drifted away to the right and left. The sun came out.

"You little absurd, ridiculous child," he said, with gracious vituperation. "So *that* is what you are coming to. Because I go in and see a dull old gentleman and a sick girl? Some of the gossips have been entertaining you, eh?"

Violet hung down her head and said nothing.

"And you have been inflaming your little jealous wits with their stories. Now, if I had not luckily hit on the true state of things, we should have had a combustion and explosion, perhaps, and possibly," Fermor added, with a climax, "a—a scene! As for having a special Act of Parliament passed forbidding conversation with ladies, or having a portable wall built round me," continued Fermor, with great humour, "and a sunk fence too wide to be jumped across by ladies, these things, my dear Violet, are not to be thought of in the nineteenth century. Even if they were, they would be absurd."

Violet smiled, not through tears, but through that little mist which was before her bright eyes.

"You *know*," she said, repeating her one idea, "you are so superior to me, and know the world so deeply, and so wonderfully. Still, as a favour to me, if you only *would*——"

"Put up the six-foot wall?" said Fermor, gaily, and with smiling encouragement. "Well, it is up. Consider it up from this moment. There!"

Overpowered by this generosity in impromptu masonry, Violet humbled herself at her lord's feet, and he raised her good naturedly.

"I shall take no more notice of them," he said. "They are scarcely, in fact, in our sphere. You well understand me, I fancy. A mere sick girl, and I, out of charity, went round the hospital."

Thus, in general effusions, and with fireworks and cathartic-wheels flying round, the scene closed in.

But that little heart was restless and troubled; she was scarcely satisfied with the magnificent explanation and the metaphors of the stone wall and Acts of Parliament. Her instinct pierced through all the disguises of "sick girl," "charity," "hospital," and the rest of it. If a "sick girl," perhaps an interesting girl, and charity was terribly akin to warmer feelings. So, when her grand caliph was gone, she gave way to the gloomiest despondency. She was miserable, and there was no happiness on earth.

She knew Fermor was gone down to the barracks "to be made a machine of," as he put it, and she knew where Brown's-terrace was pretty well. She presently got on her bonnet, the bonnet with the red flower, and that seemed to be made of spiders' webs, and with her little face full of care, tripped away in a guilty sort of fashion.

At Brown's-terrace she passed hurriedly before the house, scarcely venturing to look at it;

then came back, reconnoitring it softly like a vidette. Gradually growing bolder, she got courage for a steady look at the drawing-room windows on each side, but saw nothing. She went away, took a short walk, and came back timorously, and then saw at one of the windows a girl in an invalid's attitude, with a book which she had been reading on her lap; and this girl she saw in a second was *not* "a sick girl" in the sense described, but a very soft and interesting "delicate" creature.

The colour came to her cheeks again, as, indeed, it did very often in the course of a day. She was *indeed* plunged into misery. She was thinking how it was now practically "all over," when she heard Young Brett's voice close beside her, telling her that she would be sure to find Fermor out now, but that if she had any message he would run to the barracks for him.

He was at that moment full of the good nature which is troublesome. Should he knock at the door and see had he by any chance come in? Very likely he would call at the Carlays, next door, with whom he was "always in and out." By the way, there was Miss Carlay in the window, and it was a great pity she was so delicate, was it not?

Violet, thinking she was now fairly embarked in diplomacy, thought timorously how she would examine this boyish witness. "But he never sees these people—latterly, I mean," she said. "I think he said he had given them up!"

Young Brett laughed with all the boisterous scorn of superior knowledge. "No, no," he said; "they are great friends. He is the best fellow in the world. He gives up hours of his time to sitting with that poor, pretty invalid. There!" he said, triumphantly, "there's her father!" And the grim figure stalked down the steps, shut to what was part of his flesh and blood—that is, the iron gate—opened the gate next door, and stalked up Fermor's steps.

In hopeless confusion she returned home, and spent a troubled night. Poor soul! she was a child, as Fermor had told her, and she tried hard to comfort herself with his assurance about the stone wall and the sunk fence. Though she knew so little of the world, she had her hurricanes in a Sevres teacup, and a whole view of the world in a stereoscope.

When Fermor reached home, he found a letter and a piece of news waiting for him. The letter was from Lady Laura Fermor, and his forehead contracted as he read it. The piece of news was that Mr. Carlay had called, and his brow cleared again. "On his knees, it seems," he said, gaily. Before he had been in ten minutes, the human casting was stalking into his room once more. Fermor fetched out his coat of supreme indifference, and got into it as into a paletot.

"I was here before to-day," said the other. "You were out, it seems."

Fermor shrugged his shoulders, and the shoulders seemed to say in their own language, "Was our master obliged to wait at home? or to be always in on the chance of *your* honouring us with a visit?"

"You have been busy, I suppose, all this week past?" continued Mr. Carlay. "Your time has been taken up, I presume?"

"I generally contrive that it shall be," said Fermor, carelessly. "I have generally to compress two days' work into one. I like to be busy." This was the idea in his mind, but in reality he never had any of that trouble of compression. "Well," he continued, with a smile, "assuming this as a basis—that I have sufficient to keep me employed?"

The other looked at him steadfastly. "I think," he said, "what has once been begun should go on. There should be no interruption without cause. If one man cares to see another, and has been seeing another for a time, it seems unmeaning that he should suddenly break off without reason. Life is not to be a series of spasms."

Fermor followed him perfectly. "Of course not," he said. "I hope Miss Carlay is better to-day?"

Mr. Carlay rose less hastily. "I don't know," he said, with really something like agitation; "she *was* better, and I thought she was mending. Sometimes I think it her spirits. I am too gloomy company. But what can I do? No one naturally cares to come to our gloomy house, and I have not the knack of giving a cheerful welcome."

"You should cheer her up," said Fermor, gaily.

"I!" said Mr. Carlay, grimly showing his teeth; then, with an almost painful effort to give flexibility to the iron about his face, "If you *would* be kind enough to look in at some spare time, and talk a little to her as people of the world do. She likes it, I think, and I have lost the trick."

Fermor smiled; first at the notion of his calling genius a trick; secondly, at the notion of his ever having had it. But the flavour of the homage in the whole transaction was so welcome, that the message from the throne came couched in the most gracious terms.

"Would Miss Carlay be able to see people to-morrow?" he said, as if a new idea had occurred suddenly to him. "Any rate, I will take my chance. I have just got some of Hachette's new things I should like to show her" (i.e. lecture on).

Then Mr. Carlay went his way grimly. And Fermor, stretching himself like a minister who had just given an audience, began to open his mail of letters. There were the usual elements—a circular, a bill, an application to be steward at the dinner for Charwomen's Orphans, and the domestic letter. They all received speedy and decent burial in a waste-paper basket under the table, with the exception of Lady Laura's. It was headed "London, Duke's Hotel, Dover-street," which startled him a little, and ran:

"My dear Charles,—We are all arrived here safely, after a dreadful journey which has turned Alice and Blanche into perfect wrecks." (It was a little unjust laying this to the door of the

journey.) "We shall rest here until to-morrow, when we shall set off for Eastport."

"We are all in a fever of curiosity to see the girl you have chosen. At least, the girls are; for I, at this very moment, have a perfect idea of her before me. I always agreed with you in liking those high-bred tall classical creatures, almost cold in their manner, and as well trained in society as soldiers. You are a little cold yourself, my dear Charles, and run a little into the extreme. But it is de rigueur in a woman."

"Our relative, Poccock, is coming with us, and in his way is, I suspect, as curious as the girls. She must be careful before him, my dear Charles, for, *entre nous*, he knows men and women like his spelling-book."

"You will have apartments looked out for us in a genteel situation; three bedrooms, a sitting-room, and a parlour."

"Believe me, your affectionate mother,

"LAURA FER MOR."

He was chafed and "put out" by this letter. "Why should she take that into her head?" he said. "Does she suppose I am to marry a stalactite? Not one of them *ever* understood me. Women always take you literally in everything you say. Now, we shall have a regular exhibition, and I shall have them all staring with eye-glasses at my show." He got up disgusted and walked about. "I knew they would be making a fuss. I had an instinct of it. Coming this way in a mob! Really intolerable!" And he walked round and round with disgusted protest. "And *she*," he said, with a stamp, "to be 'cold' forsooth, and exhibit training indeed!" He was now at the very pinnacle of disgust, but at the same time he felt a sudden uncomfortable chill as he thought of how "the girl he had chosen" would behave among these cold inquirers.

WORKMEN'S DISEASES.

OUR recent account of the substance of the health officer's report upon the lives and deaths of the people, left a few points lightly touched upon, which are worth fuller detail. Scurvy, for example, a disease wholly preventable, on which Dr. Robert Barnes, physician to the Dreadnought, is reporter. The vegetarian, says Dr. Barnes, is not so irrationally fed as the man living upon salt meat and flour. Scurvy, a partial death of the blood, is the inevitable consequence of the privation of vegetable food. It is a consequence equally sure by land or sea, and the disease is known as sea-scurvy only, because landmen now seldom omit vegetables from their diet. Before there were long sea voyages, scurvy was a land disease, and in the north of Europe it used to be common, even in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, during winter and early spring. It never was common in the south, where winter is short and vegetable food abundant. The Dutchmen, who in the last century lived chiefly upon salt pork and beef, were much

troubled with scurvy, but drainage and improved cultivation, by giving a more varied and full supply of vegetables, have banished the disease. In Scotland, scurvy was common a hundred years ago, under the name of "blacklegs." We still draw from the neighbouring countries of the Continent much of the large supply of vegetable necessary to the health of London; but in the days of Henry the Eighth, scurvy might well be common, for Queen Catherine, when she wanted a salad, had to send a messenger for it to Holland or Flanders.

But our great preserver against land scurvy is the potato, which has the inestimable quality of being storeable for winter use. By very many the potato is almost the only vegetable used, and that being used all the year round is enough safeguard against scurvy. In the winter and spring of the years eighteen 'forty-six and seven, after a failure of the potato crop, there was land scurvy both in Scotland and Ireland. The railway labourers, who lived upon bread, salt pork, salt butter, cheese, coffee, tea, and sugar, suffered severely. The Irish, who have always been great vegetable eaters, had never in their history suffered so much from scurvy as in that same year when green vegetables and potatoes were excluded from the food of thousands. When vegetables were supplied, the sick were cured. So it is that, in towns closely besieged, when vegetables fail, scurvy breaks out. At Breda, in sixteen 'twenty-seven, its attack was so terrible that it was taken for the plague. The town had been victualled only with bad rye, cheese, and dried fish. At the siege of Thorn, five or six thousand of the garrison and many townspeople perished of scurvy, while, it being summer-time, the Swedes outside, who had command of the green crops, were free from the pestilence. A hundred years ago, the British troops at Quebec, by constant living upon salt provisions, suffered from scurvy, and a thousand of them died before health was restored by the use of onions, turnips, spruce beer, and green vegetables. That the meat has usually been salt meat in these cases is but an accidental, not an essential condition. In the middle of the last century, when Sisinghurst Castle, in Kent, was full of French prisoners, scurvy broke out among them for want of vegetable food, although their diet was fresh meat and bread. Less than thirty years ago, there was, from like cause, scurvy among troops at the Cape who had no salt provisions. It used to be not uncommon also in our penitentiaries and prisons, when only fresh meat was used, but the requirement of fresh vegetables was not properly understood. Want of vegetables brought the scourge of scurvy upon the allied armies at the outset of the late Russian war. It was got rid of by a distribution of vegetables and lime juice, and in the navy it had hardly been felt at all, for when the vegetables failed, there was the supply of preserved lime juice to fall back upon, and half an ounce a day of preserved lime juice is found to compensate for the want of vegetable food in its more customary forms.

Of old, in long sea voyages, scurvy seemed unavoidable. During the expedition of Lord Anson, in seventeen 'forty, and the four following years, three ships that had left England with nine hundred and sixty-one men, lost by scurvy all but three hundred and thirty-five. Captain Cook was the first to show the way to maintain health at sea, and with his ship "Discovery," after a voyage of more than four years, returned without loss of a single man. He took out a large supply of sauer-kraut, made his men gather wild eatable herbs, and eat them even if they were unpalatable. He was particularly careful also to make beer of the green tops of the spruce fir, which he found to be an excellent anti-scorbutic. Cook's lesson was not learnt immediately by his countrymen. In seventeen 'eighty the squadron under Admiral Geary returned to Portsmouth after a cruise of ten weeks in the Bay of Biscay, with two thousand four hundred men smitten by scurvy. Fifteen years later an outbreak of scurvy imperilled the safety of the whole Channel Fleet under Lord Howe. The crews were restored to health by oranges and salads, and since that time lemon juice has been regularly supplied to the navy, the result of its introduction being a sudden and very great decrease of mortality. Scurvy, except in rare cases of exigency, is a disease now as little known in the royal navy as on land, although its ships often remain at sea for periods far beyond the ninety or hundred days, which is usually the extreme limit of the voyage of a merchant vessel without touching port. Voyages of ninety or a hundred days are often made under the conditions of the Emigration Service without a death, yet it is a shameful fact that in our general merchant service scurvy is increasing rather than decreasing. In twelve years the Dreadnought has received more than a thousand cases, wanton neglect being the cause of every one. Nearly half the men admitted in London into the Home for Sailors are also afflicted with scurvy; this gives more than another thousand cases in the last seven years, and a large but uncertain number of cases are taken into the low lodging-houses of the water-side. This in London alone; in a single English port, where it is found that the ships which maintain scurvy, are not exclusively London ships. Of eighty-six cases of scurvy admitted last year into the Dreadnought, only fourteen belonged to vessels of the port of London, one-and-twenty were from Liverpool ships, eight belonged to Sunderland ships, two to Glasgow, ten to other British ports, eleven to Hamburg, and twenty to other foreign ports. In Liverpool, therefore, and elsewhere, cases of scurvy must be numerous. At Liverpool fifty cases were admitted into the public hospitals last year.

The scurvy ships are chiefly those which come from Shanghai, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Kurrachee, Colombo, and the Mauritius. Scurvy has been produced in a Hamburg ship during a voyage of only fifty-six days from St. Domingo, and the number of days at sea varies from that

lowest number to a hundred and seventeen. Yet when vessels have half their crews thus disabled, captains straining to make short voyages are known to run past St. Helena or the Western Isles, when a few hours' delay would get enough of fresh provisions to secure the health of all on board. In ships that breed scurvy, either there is no lime juice served out, or it is bad, or some wilful men have refused to take the lime juice, and have taken the scurvy. Too often, the price of good lime juice being grudged, a cheap and inefficient article, manufactured for the market, is bought in its stead. It fails, and then it is said that lime juice is of no use, and not worth carrying at all. There is also in the usual selection of provisions—salt beef and pork, flour, peas, biscuit, tea or coffee, sugar and rum—too little regard paid, to their anti-scorbutic quality. In the salting of meat it is also to be remembered that the dry salt, first rubbed in, forms with the juices of the meat a brine, which is a concentrated soup, and that the nutritive elements of meat thus extracted are partly lost in boiling, or in the towing overboard, not uncommon on board ship, where, the sea-water being less salt than the brine of the meat, the meat is washed by dragging through the sea for some hours before cooking. Moreover, when scurvy appears, the sore gums are unable to masticate the hard salt meat and biscuit. The Crusaders used to suffer terribly from scurvy, and it is said that they underwent the torture of having their swollen and ulcerated gums cut away by the barber before they could eat.

Scurvy, expelled now from the land, from the army, from the royal navy, from the emigrant and convict ship, and from a large part of the merchant navy, is bred only in the fore-castle of the ill-found merchant ship, among the common sailors—sacrificed by the owners to wring money out of their very lives. In the cabin of the worst found vessel, care enough is taken to prevent scurvy from occurring, and it never does occur. Sir James Graham's Merchant Seaman's Act of eighteen 'thirty-five, which has been called the Magna Charta of the merchant sailor, requires that whenever any crew has been on salt provision for ten days, lime or lemon juice and sugar shall be served out at the daily rate of half an ounce of each, with half a pint a week of vinegar. This is sufficient to prevent scurvy. Where scurvy occurs the law has been broken. Yet the penalty has never been enforced. When scurvy breaks out in a ship, the proportion of the crew disabled varies from twenty to seventy per cent, and as the owners who grudge the cost of a little lime juice to maintain their crews in health are the same men who economise by under-manning their ships, the scurvy ships are those which, of all others, have not a hand to spare, and in a stress of weather the ship may go down for want of hands enough to bring her to.

The proposed remedy of all this is to make the Merchant Seaman's Act more firmly operative than it is. At present it provides that inspection of a ship may be obtained upon com-

plaint of three of the crew. But the crew about to leave port cannot complain of the state of the provisions which they will only find out by experience during the voyage, and sailors are no more apt than other untaught people—or than many taught people—to take care that they live wholesomely. There should be, says Dr. Barnes, systematic inspection, as of emigrant and private passenger ships, before sailing, and a medical inspection of the ship's crew, of the master's log of cases of sickness on board during the voyage, and of the sanitary state of the ship and remaining stores, on entering port. The penalties for not carrying lime juice should, he urges, be enforced; the existence of scurvy on board should at once subject the master of a ship to a court of inquiry, and owners and masters of scurvy ships should be held personally liable in damages to the sailors whose health, their only possession, has been wantonly injured. As for death by scurvy, it is death by a preventable starvation. In every such case an inquest should be held, and the responsibility laid publicly at the right person's door. Dependence for the prevention of scurvy should not, of course, be exclusively upon lime juice, but preserved meats should occasionally take the place of salt meats, and use should be made of preserved potatoes, carrots, turnips, onions, celery, and mint, of pickles or sauer-kraut, and no opportunity should be lost of getting fresh oranges, lemons, shaddocks, or cocoa-nuts. In case of a ship's being lost at sea, when it is proved that there was scurvy on board, that fact should vitiate the insurance policies.

From this preventable disease caused by defect of nourishment, the question passes to the deaths of men produced more or less unavoidably by the trades in which they are said to "get their living." There are the workers with lead, for example. Upon these Dr. George Whitley reports. Among the smelters life and lead are both saved since the introduction some years ago of very long flues in which the fumes are condensed as they pass. Before that change the workmen suffered from lead poisoning. The manufacture of white lead, or carbonate of lead, is the most dangerous sort of work upon lead. Sheet lead is stacked in layers, each layer placed over shallow earthen vessels containing crude vinegar, or pyroligneous acid, and separated by spent tan and boarding from the layers above and below. The stack so made is closed in, and after a few weeks unpacked by women, when the sheets of lead are found to have been nearly or entirely changed into carbonate, which has only to be washed, ground while wet, dried in ovens, and thence carried by women to be packed in casks by men. During the unpacking of the stacks, the carrying of the dried powder to the casks, and, above all, in the packing of the casks by stamping down the powder with a beetle, lead poison flies as dust in the air, is breathed and acts upon the system. The common result is lead colic, easily cured, the worst results are palsy, affections of the brain, and gout. The Newcastle manufacturers

whose works were examined, hang up in their workrooms regulations amply precautionary, and have attached baths to their establishments; but it is found difficult to make the workpeople take proper care of themselves, and when the effects of lead poison become even seriously manifest in any one, it is sometimes difficult to get persons so affected to desist from the well-paid employment that is injuring them. The manufacturers of red lead suffer little, there is less need to touch it, it does not fly about in a fine powder, and it can be packed without stamping down. Sugar of lead is not made in this country. From a third to a ninth part is white lead in the glaze of potters, which is made as a thickish cream, into which the ware is dipped with a skill that requires experience, so that the dippers remain at their work for years, up to the elbows in lead glaze for eight hours a day. The number of dippers is small, and they suffer little by this direct contact of the skin with the poison, though some show the blue line on the edge of the gums, which shows that the lead has found its way into the blood.

Now that painted walls are less common than they used to be, and painters, like other men, are cleaner than their forefathers, lead-poisoning is much less common in their trade than formerly. In establishments employing fifty hands there have been only one or two cases of lead colic in twenty years, and there has been no case of the palsy of the hand, known as drop-hand. The change is partly ascribed to the use of an outer suit of washable material, worn only in working hours, and washed every week, in place of the old usage of wearing a suit of clothes till it was coated with paint, and frequently not changing it after work was done. Among plumbers also, the trade has lost its old unhealthy character, lead colic is rare, and drop-hand very rare indeed. To the use of machinery in some processes, and still more to the greater cleanliness of the men, this change for the better is attributed. Printers, type-founders, shot-makers, enamellers of cards and clock-faces, floorcloth manufacturers, and glass-makers, use lead, but without suffering therefrom any serious consequences.

Of the workers in mercury or quicksilver, the few who are employed in what is called water-gilding, suffer inevitably from the fumes intentionally produced to expel the mercury from an amalgam of mercury and gold laid on the object that is to be gilt in this manner. The mercury is discharged in vapour by holding the article that is to be gilt over a charcoal fire, and afterwards burnishing. A glass sash descending to the arms is placed between the workman's face and his work when the article to be worked upon is not so large as to make its effective use impossible.

The five or six men employed at a time in this process, do not, for health's sake, work in it for more than two or three days a week, and the process is being gradually superseded by electroplate. In silvering mirrors a sheet of tinfoil is laid on the stone silvering table, a large quan-

tity of mercury is poured upon it, and the sheet of glass is then slid over the surface of the tinfoil, so that an even layer of quicksilver lies everywhere between the tin, with which it forms an amalgam, and the glass. The excess of quicksilver runs off the table into vessels set to receive it, and is strained for further use. A scum on the surface, and a greyish powder on the table, show that there is considerable oxidation, and it is the oxide of the metal floating as dust in the air of the room, or eaten with the food from unwashed fingers, which causes what mercurial poisoning comes of this process. It is not much now, for here also the better management of workrooms, and an improved sense of the use of air and water, have made an end of the old unhealthiness. Where the processes are carried on, as they also are in the confined homes of poor workers, the disease induced must be more common. The nitrate, or occasionally, perhaps, some other preparation of mercury, is used by the furriers in dressing skins, and there have been even fatal cases of mercurial poisoning as a consequence of this, but here also disease is said to be not frequently produced.

Of printers, the mortality is high, mainly for want of space and ventilation in the printing offices, which frequently are old houses ill suited for the work, for want also of the washing of floors and stairs practised in private houses, and of the lime-washing of walls twice a year; for the common want also of good drainage, and a complete separation of the water-closets from the workrooms; for want of a wholesomely regulated system of overwork and nightwork, and for want of wholesome arrangement for the taking of their meals by the compositors. Consumption is twice as common among London printers as it is among the general male population of London, and the mortality of London printers, between the ages of thirty-five and forty-five, is considerably more than double that of the male agricultural population; while a great deal of this mortality, and of the great mass of sickness and debility to which it is an index, could be prevented if some proper and reasonable regulations were enforced.

THE BLUE MOUNTAIN EXILE.

From his hut he strays forth, to gaze on the night,
The old starry story, with mists round the dome;
And, below, 'tis a squalid and desolate sight;
A hideous monotony—mud-gleams and gloom.

Beyond, sleeps the forest, all dark; and, between,
Gold-diggings, deserted, like huge graveyards
yawn

(The Last Day long pass'd from poor earth's work'd-out scene),

From whose gaps both the soul and the body are gone.

Back-gazing, he broods on his lonely retreat;
The blue-curtain'd lattice gleams faint o'er the swamp;

No living thing waits there his footstep to greet,
He will find a void cell, and his time-waning lamp.

His arms are grown hard by the swing of the axe;
His palms dry and grain'd by the sap of the wood;
His hair, once all waves, now wind-battered flax,
But he feeleth no change in his blood.

The winds are gone down, the night-hours are dead,
Yet silence so sad that it hints of no dawn;
The Blue Mountain hurricanes rang round his head,
Then left him in statue-trance, firm though forlorn.

The black snake lies torpid beneath the dead logs,
Or creeps o'er the sludge to the mouldering dell,
Where luminous fungi, and leaden-grey frogs,
Each other confront—spell-bound, and a spell.

By the cold water-reptiles' humming quire
The silence is magnetised: hark! the weird tune!
A char'd trunk appears—the black ghost of fire:
Bogs and frogs, and the mist, and the moon.

In this Hades of hopelessness, think not he grieves,
Or feels his strong soul-life one moment despond
He believes in himself, because he believes
In the Voice of a Spirit beyond!

QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER LVI. AT REST.

SEEING that the countess was seriously injured, Mr. M'Variety elevated himself upon the edge of the ring, and inquired if there were a doctor present. There were several doctors present, all eager and anxious to distinguish themselves in the eyes of the public. There never is any lack of practitioners when accidents occur at places of public entertainment. M.D.s in the stalls, M.B.s in the boxes, M.R.C.S.s in the pit; dentists in the slips, and herbalists in the gallery. It is like asking a question of a clever class at a normal school; a score of arms go up at once. Get off your horse in a London thoroughfare, when you don't happen to be attended by a groom, and bridle-holders innumerable start up out of the earth. Medical advice was showered thickly upon Mr. M'Variety; pouring over from the boxes, the circle, and the amphitheatre into the arena, like a cataract of healing waters. Mr. M'Variety would have been puzzled how to act, had he not recognised among the volunteers a personal friend of his own. This gentleman being singled out to attend the case, the others retired in high dudgeon, feeling themselves greatly aggrieved that they had not been allowed to deny themselves a night's rest, and be the instruments of alleviating suffering at the sacrifice of their comfort and of the ordinary reward, which none of them looked for, or would have accepted, if it had been offered to them.

Some horse-cloths were spread upon one of the spring-boards used by the Bounding Brothers of Babylon, and the countess being laid upon this, was carried out of the ring into the property-room behind the curtain. Sir William Long had gone to the countess's dressing-room to break the news to Lily, and to offer her what assistance

and comfort he could under her new trial. He found her in great agitation, for she had heard the commotion in the circus, and divined that something had happened to her mother. When Sir William told her that the countess had fallen from the horse and was seriously hurt, the girl sank into a chair, and wept and sobbed bitterly. She had little cause to weep for such a mother; but in that one moment of her misfortune, she forgot and forgave all, and thought of the harsh cruel woman only with love and tenderness and pity.

"I trust, Lily," said Sir William, "I trust you will permit me to be your friend under this trial. I ask for nothing but to be allowed to serve you."

"Oh, Sir William, you are very kind, very good," the weeping girl said, rising, and clasping his hands with both hers. "I shall ever be grateful to you."

Again that cold word! Sir William sighed, and looked at her sadly, taking her little hands between his own, and patting them tenderly.

"Where is my mother?" Lily asked. "I must go to her."

"Stay," said Sir William. "I think you had better not go to her now. It would be too painful; she is under the care of a doctor, and to-morrow she may be better. Wait a little."

"No, no," said Lily; "let me go to her at once; it is my duty. She—she is my mother!"

"Let me accompany you, then," said the baronet; "perhaps I can be of some service."

Lily accepted the offer with gratitude; and, taking her hand, Sir William led her, as he would have led a child, out of the dressing-room and along the dark passage into the shed, to which the insensible form of her mother had been removed.

It had been determined to take the injured woman to the Cottage at once, and four men were carrying her from the circus into the gardens. She was lying in a shapeless heap on the spring-board, covered with horse-cloths. Sir William and Lily, hand in hand, followed the melancholy procession across the stone-paved yard, among litter and property chariots, and horses showing their hind quarters through the open doors of the stables; out through the narrow stage entrance of the circus, where the spring-board had scarcely room to turn; out into the gardens and down the broad walk among the coloured lights, blinking wearily and unsteadily in their cups; under the gaunt and leafless trees, nodding their bare branches like the stalks of funeral plumes that had been stripped of their feathers; past the spectral ash-trees suspending their skeleton hands over the seats of pleasure; moving slowly among the whitewashed statues bathed from head to foot in greenish tears, wrung from the anguish of blighted leaves and the moisture of winter mosses desperately clinging to their verdure—the men passed along with their moaning burden to the Cottage.

Among those who walked by the side of the litter, and close to the figure that lay upon it,

the baronet observed the strange-looking man he had noticed in the circus. He called Lily's attention to him, and asked if she knew who he was.

Lily started. She had seen that face before; she remembered it well; yet she could not tell when or where.

"Yes," she said, "I have seen him before—in Paris—no, not in Paris, before that, somewhere, somewhere."

While the girl was wondering, the men pained in the porch with their burden, until the door was opened by Mrs. Snuffburn. Mr. M'Variety took this opportunity to arrest the further progress of the crowd of idlers who had followed the litter through the gardens. When the countess had been carried in, he remained in the porch to prevent the mob from entering the house. The man with the grey hair and the dark eyebrows and moustache presented himself, and desired to be admitted.

"I cannot allow you to pass," said the manager.

"I am a friend of the lady," said the stranger, "an old friend."

"Oh, no doubt," said the manager, "and I dare say the mob at your heels are all old friends of the lady too."

"I assure you, sir, I am speaking the truth," said the stranger, earnestly; "let me pass, I beseech you."

Sir William Long and Lily came up at this moment. The stranger no sooner saw Lily than he started, and, uttering an exclamation of surprise, held out his hands to her.

"Lily Floris! Lily Floris!" he exclaimed, "do you, can you remember me?"

Lily shrank from the man in alarm.

"Do you really know this young lady?" asked the baronet.

"Yes, sir," the stranger replied, "and her mother also. I am her oldest friend, one that might have been her dearest friend, and have saved her from this." He whispered a word in Sir William's ear.

"You may let this person pass, Mr. M'Variety," said Sir William; "it is no idle curiosity that brings him here."

No, indeed, it was no idle curiosity that prompted Jean Baptiste Constant to follow the bruised and bleeding form of the woman he had once so deeply, madly loved; to seek to stand beside her, perhaps in her last moments, and tell her that though she had rejected his love and requited his kindness with ingratitude and scorn, he was yet willing to forgive her all. They carried the countess up into the gilded apartment. It was blazing with light, and the table was laid for supper—that supper to which she had invited her aristocratic friends, promising to make a night of it and be gay.

The men, as they bore her into the room, stumbled among wine-baskets and dishes of fruit that had been set upon the floor ready for the feast. They carried her at once into her own room, and were about to lift her upon the bed, when the surgeon, drawing aside the cur-

tains, discovered that it had been made the temporary receptacle for champagne bottles. These hastily removed, the injured woman was laid upon the bed; and she lay there for some minutes apparently lifeless, with the full blaze of the lights from the great chandelier falling upon her livid face.

The doctor, finding only a slight scalp wound over her temple, was inclined to think that her injuries were not serious; and this opinion seemed to be confirmed when she opened her eyes and looked about her calmly. But presently, when she drew a full breath, she put her hand to her side and uttered a cry of pain. This told the doctor that there were other injuries, and that the case might be more serious than he had first imagined. He begged Mr. M'Variety to send for another surgeon at once. This was done, and in the mean time the surgeon in attendance endeavoured, with the assistance of Lily and Mrs. Snuffburn, to undress the patient. This, however, she resisted, waving them off with her hand, and groaning piteously every time she drew her breath.

When the other surgeon arrived, a second attempt was made to undress her, but she screamed so dreadfully that the doctors were fain to desist. She lay with her eyes wide open, fixed and staring blankly; her breath was coming in short quick gasps, and at every gasp she uttered a moan. The doctors felt her pulse, and looked at each other anxiously.

Sir William Long and Constant, interpreting their looks, stepped forward to ask their opinion of the case.

"I am afraid she is sinking," said the surgeon of whom he made the inquiry; "she has received some internal injury, and refuses to be moved."

Presently the countess turned her eyes full upon Lily, who was sitting weeping and trembling by her bedside, and said, in French:

"Is he here?"

Lily looked at her through her tears inquiringly.

"Constant, Constant," her mother gasped out; "Jean Baptiste Constant!"

Constant, who was standing at the door with Sir William Long, heard her mention his name, and entered the chamber.

The eyes of the woman were waiting for him, and when he came upon her view she held out her hand to him.

Constant sprang to the bedside, and, falling upon his knee, took up the hand from the counterpane, upon which it had fallen, and kissed it.

He had kissed that hand once before, when it was rudely drawn from him with a bitter word and a mocking taunt. It was not drawn away from him now.

"Jean Baptiste Constant," she said, feebly, "I am dying; that beast has trodden the life out of me. Tell these people to retire, all but you and—and my child."

The doctors and Mrs. Snuffburn retired, and Constant and Lily were left alone by the bedside

of the dying woman. They knelt down together beside her, and waited for her to speak. It was some time before she moved or uttered a word. At length she raised her arm feebly, took Lily's hand, and placed it in that of Constant.

"Protect her," she said; "I leave her to your care."

"I accept the trust," Constant replied, solemnly.

After a pause, the countess turned her eyes towards Lily, and said, "Withdraw for a little, and leave us—alone."

Lily rose from her knees, blinded with tears, leaving the room, dazed, stupefied; filled with a strange wonder.

When the door was closed, the countess roused herself a little, and grasped Constant's hand almost fiercely.

"Can you forgive me?" she said, despairingly. "Can you—can you forgive me?"

"Yes, yes," he said; "I can—I do!"

"All?" she asked, eagerly.

"All; everything, everything. Oh, Valérie, Valérie!"

"I have been very wicked, Jean Baptiste, very ungrateful, very cruel, very heartless; but—but it was not my fault. It was born in me, whipped into me, beaten into me with kicks and blows. The devil has been in me from my birth, and held possession of me from first to last. Had he left me for one moment, I might have requited your kindness and been your wife, and we might have been happy now in France. But the devil which possessed me made me proud, ambitious, ungrateful, and wicked, and he has hurried me on to this dreadful end among strangers in a foreign land. Had I been born with a good spirit in me, Jean Baptiste, I should have been good and virtuous, I should have been grateful, I should have returned your love and care, and we might have been happy now in France."

She paused frequently while she murmured these words, laying her hand upon her side, and moaning with a wail of anguish.

"I know," she continued, "I have been very, very wicked; but could I help it, Jean Baptiste? Can wheat grow where only tares have been sown; can flowers spring up from a soil rank with the roots of weeds? You sent me to school to be taught, to learn to be good; but it was too late, the evil spirit came with my first breath. I have been possessed, Jean Baptiste, possessed by the devil all my life; and now, oh Heaven! what shall I do, what shall I do?"

A sudden paroxysm seized her, and she clutched fiercely at the bed-clothes, as if she were struggling with death. When she grew calmer, Constant took her hand gently, and said:

"Pray, Valérie; pray to Heaven to forgive you."

"I cannot pray," she said. "It is so long since I have prayed. I have forgotten how to pray. Oh, mercy, mercy." She gasped for breath, and again clutched at the bed-clothes fiercely.

Constant rose and went to the door and

beckoned to Lily. She entered the room with a scared look upon her face, timidly. Constant took her by the hand and led her to the bedside. Her mother turned and saw her, and grasped at her hand as if for rescue.

"My child," she said, "you are good, you are innocent, you have learned to pray; pray for me, pray for me." She drew Lily's little hand towards her, and implored her with kisses.

And Lily knelt down by the bedside, clasped her hands, and prayed for her mother, looking upwards through her tears, and beseeching God to pardon her all her sins for the Saviour's sake. The worn, crushed, sin-burdened woman caught at the last blessed words of the prayer, and repeated them again and again, eagerly clinging to them with her failing breath and faltering tongue, until she floated away from earth upon the raft of promise which her child had launched into the sea of her despair.

CHAPTER LVII. DUST TO DUST.

LILY was once more Quite Alone—alone with her dead mother in the Cottage in the Gardens of Ranelagh.

The mystery of her mother's dying words had been explained to her by Jean Baptiste Constant. He repeated to her, with many merciful reservations, the Idyll of Marouille-le-Gency, which the reader knows. Lily was rather afraid of the strange-looking man at first; but when she knew all, and heard from his trembling lips the story of his early love for her mother, of his devotion to her father, and of his care for herself in the days of her childhood, she gave him her complete confidence, and accepted his guardianship gladly. For she knew now that he had been a father to her—the only father she had ever had. Constant was anxious—eagerly anxious—that she should at once leave the Cottage and take up her abode at Pomeroy's Hotel in Great Grand-street, of which he was the proprietor. Sir William Long also urged her to leave the Cottage and go to Pomeroy's. But she declined for the present; and begged to be allowed to remain, to perform the last offices to her mother.

Seeing that she was resolved upon this, they refrained from pressing her further.

"Perhaps it will be better," Sir William whispered to Constant, "to withhold the disclosure until after the funeral. Does *he* know?"

"Not yet," Constant replied.

"In that case," said the baronet, "it will be well to say nothing to *him* either. Both must be prepared for it."

"I thought of leaving it to a chance meeting," Constant replied. "He is a singular man."

"And might prefer to be guided by his own impulses."

"Yes," said Constant, "that is my impression."

"You know him best," returned the baronet; "do as you think fit."

Lily observed this whispered conversation, and connecting it with the proposition which had been made to her, wondered why both Sir

William and Constant were so anxious for her to go to Pomeroy's.

An inquest was held upon the body of the countess, and the jury returned a verdict of accidental death. The moment the inquest was over, Mr. M'Variety, the manager, waited upon Lily with the kind intention of taking the responsibility of the funeral off her hands. In his kindest intentions Mr. M'Variety always had an eye to business.

"I've been thinking, missy," he said, "that your poor mamma ought to have a grand funeral. She was a celebrated public character, you know, and is entitled to it; besides, my dear, she has done so well for me this season, that I should like to show my respect for her."

Lily timidly ventured to think that, under the painful circumstances, it would be better if the funeral were conducted quietly.

Mr. M'Variety, however, did not see it in this light.

"Now, I think you're wrong there, my dear," he said. "When a celebrated person like your ma dies, and we must all die, my dear, some time or other"—Mr. M'Variety had it on the tip of his tongue to add "worse luck," but suddenly discovering that he was moralising prettily, checked himself, and glided over into another sentiment. "And the least we can do, when eminent personages depart," he continued, "is to pay respect to their ashes. I don't know what you think, my dear, but when any friend of mine departs this life, I always feel that I can't grieve half enough for him—not so much as I ought, you know. It's such a busy world, my dear, and one's got so much to attend to, one hasn't time for it. What I say, then, is, if you haven't tears for a departed friend, give him feathers; give him six black horses; give him mutes; and if you haven't time to weep yourself, let crape weep for you. In this busy world, my dear, you're obliged to do a good deal of this sort of thing by deputy. You've been in France most of your life, and don't know; but in this country, the swells, when they can't attend a funeral themselves, send their empty carriages, and the horses and the coachmen do the mourning for them."

Poor Lily! *She* had never been able to shift her burden of sorrow to other shoulders, but had borne her own grief, wearily, for many a day through a vale of bitter tears. She was weeping now.

"Now don't you cry, missy, or bother yourself about it at all," said the manager. "I'll attend to everything. I have a friend at Chelsea Hospital, and I dare say through him I shall be able to borrow the car that was used at the funeral of Lord Nelson. If it's out of order, Billy Van Post will soon touch it up a bit; or if they won't lend it, Billy can knock up something of the same sort; and we'll have the circus horses out, and I'm sure all my people will attend as a mark of respect to a member of their profession."

Mr. M'Variety was thinking of an advertise-

ment for the gardens. He was not a bad fellow at heart; but he would have exhibited the mummy of his grandmother to promote business.

Luckily for Lily, whose feeble protests were completely overborne by the manager's voluble persistency in settling all the arrangements according to his own fancy, Sir William Long called at the Cottage, accompanied by Mr. Thomas Tuttleshell.

Sir William, of course, would not hear of Mr. M'Variety's proposal, and, with Lily's consent, took the management of the funeral into his own hands. In the midst of her grief and sore trouble Lily found many kind and attentive friends. Constant and Sir William Long visited her daily; Lord Carlton had called twice; old Kafooze came to the door with tears in his eyes to say that he was sorry, very sorry for having made that unlucky remark about the whip. "If I had thought, my dear, what was going to happen," he whimpered, "I wouldn't have said it for the world. But it was to be, it was to be; our destiny is with the stars, and we cannot alter it."

Poor old tender-hearted Kafooze! He was afraid that Lily might hate him for having prophesied evil; and he came to ask her pardon and plead with her for forgiveness.

Every one whom she had known at the gardens called at the Cottage to press her hand and console her with a kind word—every one but Edgar Greyfaunt.

Where was Edgar?

This was the first thought that arose in her breast when she recovered from the shock of her mother's death. She knew that he was in the circus at the time of the accident, for she had gone into the passage behind the boxes, and in peeping through the chink of a box door she had seen him talking to Sir William Long. When the countess was carried out, Sir William Long, Lord Carlton, Mr. Tuttleshell, every one of her friends and patrons had followed to the Cottage—every one except Edgar.

Whither had he gone? Why had he gone? Why had he not called to see her, to speak a word to her, to make an inquiry concerning her mother? Lily's vacant heart was filled with these distracting questions, racking her with doubts and fears which she could not bear to think of. They struggled again and again to rise to her tongue; but again and again she repressed them and kept them down, dreading to reveal to others even a suspicion of the vague fear which agitated her. Every footstep on the gravel-walk outside, every knock at the Cottage door, aroused hopes of Edgar's coming. Her tongue was silent; but her restless eye betrayed the troubled thoughts which possessed her breast.

A few minutes after the arrival of Sir William Long accompanied by Mr. Tuttleshell, Mrs. Snuffburn came in to say that there was a person below wanting to see *some one*.

"Who is the person?" the manager asked.

"I don't know, sir," said the housekeeper; "he is a stranger to me."

"What does he want?" said the manager. "Go and ask his business."

Mrs. Snuffburn was saved the trouble. The stranger had ascended the stairs and entered the room before Mr. M'Variety had finished speaking.

"Mr. M'Variety," he said, "we received this cheque the other day from Madame Ernestine, in payment of a wine bill; we gave her a receipt and the change out of it, and to-day the cheque has been returned from the bank marked 'no effects.' In fact, sir, it has been dishonoured."

"What is the amount, and whose cheque is it?" the manager asked.

"It is a cheque for twenty pounds," said the man, "and it is signed 'Edgar Greyfaunt.'"

Lily blushed crimson.

"There must be some mistake," said the manager. "Mr. Greyfaunt is a man of fortune; you'd better make inquiries again."

"It would save us much trouble, sir," said the man, "if you would pay the money."

"Oh, I can't do that," said the manager; "it's no affair of mine, you know, and—"

"Stay," said Sir William Long; "let us have no more words about the matter." And he took out his pocket-book and handed the man notes for the amount of the cheque.

"Now, sir, you may go."

The man put the dishonoured cheque on the table, took up the notes, and left the room.

Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt had paid more for his box than any of the others, but his cheque was worth exactly the value of the paper upon which it was written.

Mr. Thomas Tuttlesbell triumphed in his secret soul.

"The insolent Brummagem puppy!" he muttered between his teeth.

Mr. Tuttlesbell's only regret was, that the solemnity of the occasion forbade him to give audible expression to his satisfaction. But though he restrained himself for the moment, he could not leave without easing his soul by a commentary on Greyfaunt's shabby conduct. It was to Lily that he made the remark.

"I always thought that fellow, Greyfaunt, was an impostor," he said, "and now I am sure of it. Wasn't it good of Sir William to pay the money and save the fellow's credit, in the way he did? And without a word, too! Ah, Sir William is a real gentleman, my dear, with a big heart."

Honest Thomas! he knew not the conflict of painful emotions which these words aroused in Lily's throbbing breast.

Under the direction of Sir William Long, the funeral was conducted as plainly and privately as possible. In humble and unpretending fashion—much to Mr. M'Variety's regret, for he felt that he was losing a magnificent advertisement for the opening of the summer season—the beautiful Vaudrien Valérie, once the bright particular star of the Paris theatres, the reigning queen among the beauties of her day, the dazzling enslaver of hearts, and the wife of Francis Blunt, Esquire, an English gentleman

of high lineage and ancient descent, was carried to her last home, followed by an irregular train of horse-riders, and acrobats, and circus clowns.

Her grave had been dug at Kensal-green by order of Mr. M'Variety, who, contemplating an open car and a display of circus horses, was desirous that the route might be as long as possible: on the principle of the longer the route the better the advertisement.

Sir William Long did not join the procession at the gardens, but drove down by himself, early, and waited among the tombstones for its arrival. It was a fine, clear, frosty day, and the sun shone out cheerfully. Sir William wandered about among the monuments, thoughtful and moody. It was almost a new scene to him, for he had rarely stood among graves and felt the chastening influence which the contemplation of death exercises upon thoughtful minds. He was surprised to find himself musing pleasantly, looking death in the face in his own dominion, calmly and without fear; nay, almost envying those who slept so peacefully under mound and stone. What was it that had so subdued the heart of this man of fashion, this pleasure-loving bachelor, with all the gay delights of the world at his command, with ample wealth, with health and strength, and many days yet before him? What was it? What could it be but love, the true love of the heart, which is akin to all that is pure and holy, that love which is almost a redemption in itself, which sanctifies all things, and is a witness to the divine likeness in which man was made. It was the image of Lily's sweet face that hovered about him, brightening the scene, and robbing the graves of their terror. How he loved her! oh, so tenderly, so purely, with all his heart and with all his soul! He had led a gay, reckless life, and though in the pursuit of his pleasures he had never been heartless, or cruel, or mean, he knew and felt that he had much to answer for. But that account seemed to be redeemed by the purifying influence of the love which now filled his breast. He felt that he was a better man for it.

Sir William was startled from his reflections by a noise of wheels on the gravel-path behind him. It was the hearse containing the body of the countess, followed by the two mourning coaches. He helped Lily from her coach, and stood beside her at the mouth of the grave. Constant stood on the other side of her, and took her hand, and as dust was cast upon dust, and ashes were scattered upon ashes, Jean Baptiste Constant looked down into the grave of hopes long since blighted, long since dead, hopes that had been born and nursed in the quiet village of Marouille-le-Gency, far away in France, but which now lay here in a foreign land, buried for ever. Was it in mercy to his blank and desolate heart that the sun burst from a passing cloud and fell upon the coffin, lighting up the name upon the plate, as with a halo of glory—a promise of hope hereafter?

Sir William walked by Lily's side to the coach and helped her in. He held out his

hand to her, and she took it and pressed it warmly.

"You are going now," he said, "to a new life. May I still be your friend?"

A new life! What did he mean by those words? Lily knew not as yet; but to his last entreaty she replied, with deep emotion:

"I shall ever think of you, ever love you, ever be grateful to you."

And seated in the mourning coach beside Jean Baptiste Constant, she was carried away to her new home.

A WAIF FROM DIXIE.

SOILED, battered, torn, worn, and travel-stained, comes my package of Mobile newspapers. They are printed on half sheets of whity-brown cotton waste paper, fuzzy, rotten, and barely legible. But full of fight. The first advertisement in the first paper I open is, "Army Blanks!" The next column begins with a call for "More men for Gen. Morgan!" the adventurous cavalry officer, the news of whose death came by a recent steamer. At the head of the first column of reading matter is a Proclamation of the Governor of Alabama to the People of Mobile. Farragut was thundering at the outer gates, thirty miles off down the bay, and the governor says, "Your city is about to be attacked by the enemy. Mobile must be defended at every hazard, and to the last extremity. All who cannot fight must leave the city. The brave defenders of the city can fight with more energy and enthusiasm when they feel assured that the noble women and children are out of danger." The Mayor of Mobile enforces the appeal. Finally, Major-Gen. Maury complains that the non-combatants show no disposition to leave. There is no apprehension that the soldiers will not fight. The difficulty is to get the women *out* of the fight. News from the enemy's fleet. News from invading armies. The Siege of Charleston runs like a popular play at a London theatre, and we read the events of the "Three hundred and forty-sixth day." A shell burst in Pickens-street—negro boy slightly wounded. Shell buried itself in Moultrie-square—boys rushed with spades to dig it up. Unexpected explosion, and general scatteration. Nobody hurt.

Amid this din of arms, if the laws are silent, the muses are not. A Southern maiden writes a war-song to her lover. She gives him her faith, but not her hand. She tells him that

No marriage bells must ring for us
Till our dear land is free.

She tells him to "go forth into the field," and that she intends to be "a hero's bride;" and she wishes him to go at once, and be quick about it:

Now, now, while Freedom's trumpets blow,
While Freedom's banners wave,
And call on all to meet the foe,
Shrink not, thou Southern brave.

No shrinking is to be permitted. If any one

does shrink or show the white feather in the slightest degree,

Let not that wretched coward dare
Address a Southern maid.

And all whom it may concern are given very explicitly to understand that

Our hearts are only for the brave,
Our hands are for the free.

Which means that they must not only fight, but fight to the purpose, or, as it is more rhythmically expressed,

March on, where glory's banners wave,
March on to victory.

Nor has Bellona driven Thalia and Melpomene from the field. The theatre is open. Its actors and actresses rank with the non-combatants, but they also have declined to leave. The big guns are thundering down the bay, but they will play The Rough Diamond and Lucrezia Borgia, the Battle of Bosworth Field and the Honey-moon. Literature flourishes. There is a circumstantial advertisement of "Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings." Brigadier General Chalmers denounces the story that he has speculated in cotton as "a base and cowardly lie," and for this language holds himself "personally responsible to any gentleman who may feel himself aggrieved thereby." Better save his powder for the enemy at the gates. Three soldiers advertise "An Extortioner." They say: "We, the undersigned, took breakfast yesterday morning at the French restaurant of one P. Jourdan, on St. Michael-street. Our fare consisted of tripe, hash, venison steaks, six eggs, bread, butter, and rye coffee, for which the said P. Jourdan charged us twenty-four dollars." Then follow their names and qualities—privates in a Kentucky and two Mississippi regiments. Barring the rye coffee it seems a good breakfast enough, and enough of it, and the rather extravagant price may be in part accounted for by a depreciated paper currency. Confederate soldiers, breakfasting at a French restaurant on venison steaks, &c., should arrange for a fixed price, or breakfast à la carte. It may be hoped, however, that soldiers who eat and pay in that fashion, will fight accordingly.

The blockade does not wholly exclude foreign merchandise. Mr. Clarke of Royal-street, an odd name in a republican city, advertises English note and letter paper, Gillott's steel pens, London ink, and Faber's pencils. Matches are offered at five dollars a gross. There are long lists of the cargoes of blockade runners for sale, and they carry very miscellaneous cargoes, consisting of linen and cotton goods, silks, alpacas, claret, sweet oil, tea, coffee, soap, lots of cotton cards for the domestic manufacturers of the plantations, morphine, quinine, and all things hard to make, and not easy to do without. Among the other sales advertised are a "tip-top man" of thirty, one of eighteen "very likely," and one fifty-five "very reliable"—what the Northerners call "a reliable contraband." Among the women is "a fine cook

and noted washer and ironer," and her daughter, a "house girl," whom it may be presumed makes herself generally useful. A new home is also wanted for "Joanna, an extra A No. 1 cook, washer, and ironer, and her twin girl children, aged six months;" and it is added that "mother and children must be sold in the city, as her husband is here, and we will not separate them."

One is also glad to see, that even in a beleaguered city people are expected to buy brocatelle furniture, crimson upholstery, splendid carpets, beautiful pianofortes, and easy arm-chairs. The cannon thunder, shells burst, but life flows on much the same. People breakfast and dine, buy and sell, dance and sing, and, despite the poetical maiden whose song I have quoted, marry, and are given in marriage; else how are armies to be maintained if the war lasts as long as Mr. Disraeli and President Davis imagine it may?

The wants of civilisation are not suspended. While governor, mayor, and general commanding, are calling citizens to arms, and warning non-combatants to take refuge in the interior, people are advertising for houses and pianofortes, school teachers and French governesses. A singing school wants pupils, and the soldiers want books sent to their army libraries. But, above all, recruits are wanted in army and navy, horse, foot, and dragoons. The books published are chiefly on military science and surgery; but one reads with some surprise a list of new school books for the public schools of the city and state.

"Attention British Guard, Co. B." Here is an item now, coming through the blockade. Who of us, I wonder, knew that there was a British Guard among the defenders of Mobile, with two companies at least, for B supposes A, and may be followed by C, D, and E, up to a full regiment. Is there such a corps as a "British Guard" in the Federal Army? It is probably the only organised nationality that could not be found embodied on the side of the Union. Not only are English musket-holders in battle array, but English pen-holders are at the service of the Confederacy. Englishmen and English goods are at a premium.

The blurred, brown, and ragged newspapers, in all this mêlée, are not destitute of humour. The soldiers of a marching regiment are supposed to have annexed a flock of turkeys to their ordinary rations, and the unfortunate hotel-keeper from whose premises they were transferred, suggests that the turkey be adopted as the national emblem of the Confederate States, as he is satisfied that if placed upon their banners, the Confederate soldiers would follow even the picture of one to the devil.

A little quiet fun is made out of the examinations of the candidates for the posts of surgeons and engineers. "Suppose," says the examining surgeon, "a man should fall headforemost into a well that was being dug forty feet deep, and strike one of the digging implements, what would you do?" Answer—"Let the man be, and fill up the well." Says the engineer to his

candidate, "Suppose you had built an engine yourself, performed every part of the work without assistance, and knew that it was in complete order, but when put into a vessel, the pump would not draw water, what would you do?" "I should go to the side of the vessel to see if there was any water in the river." It is to be hoped that this ingenious youth got his commission.

Noticeable among the wants, are those of men not liable to be drafted for military duty, such as are exempted by age or otherwise being the only ones to be relied upon for permanent employments. The able-bodied men, under fifty, may be called upon at any moment to fight. As for the boys, they are only too impatient for the time to come when they may be soldiers. The tone of the newspapers is only too confident. The only fear seems to be that the country is not sufficiently awakened to a sense of its danger. They make the mistake of despising their enemy. They have beat him at long odds, and imagine that they can always do it. They are ready, with a single steamer, as in the case of the Tennessee, to fight a whole Federal fleet, but in running such risks they must sometimes be beaten. Otherwise, it must be confessed that the spirit of these papers is admirable. There is nothing of false excitement, or brag, or bluster. Their language is moderate, and their statements are apparently modest and truthful. They can endure the heaviest disasters with a calm patience that seems like constitutional stoicism, but which more probably comes from habitual self-reliance, and a never-failing confidence in ultimate success. It is certain that the Confederates have disappointed alike their friends and their enemies in the qualities they have developed. They were supposed to be rash, excitable, impetuous, sickle, brave no doubt, but wanting in firmness, discipline, and perseverance of character. Prior to the war, few would have believed that in such an event the South would have the calmest and wisest statesmen, the ablest generals, the best disciplined armies, and firm, patient, and devoted people. Whatever the termination of the great struggle for empire or independence, no one can deny to the Southern people the qualities they have manifested in four years of privation and war; and there would be required no better evidence of their existence than I find in this blurred bundle of newspapers, that show many signs of having come through the blockade.

SHOTS AT ELEPHANTS.

PROBABLY no man ever shot so many elephants as Major Rogers, once of the Ceylon Rifles. He kept an account of the number he had killed until it amounted to the moderate total of twelve hundred. He then got tired of keeping the score, and it is supposed that after that he shot a couple of hundred more. This is no mythical legend. It is a well-known, and recognised, and undisputed fact. He would undertake sometimes to do strange things in the shooting line; for instance, to kill two elephants

at one discharge of his gun. This he accomplished by waiting till a young one was below its mother, when he would fire at the latter, and her fall would kill the young one. It is almost distressing to think of the enormous quantity of animal matter thus left in the forests by one single man, and we can hardly consider such destruction justifiable, even though we know that numbers of animals would be ready to fall upon the carcase and fatten thereon as soon as the sportsman had left. But it is well known that Major Rogers purchased one or more steps in the army by the proceeds of the ivory secured in this manner, for although very few Ceylon elephants have tusks, all have tushes.

It may be supposed that Major Rogers was a man who devoted his whole time to shooting. This is very far from the truth. He was the principal government officer in a district containing some eighty thousand inhabitants. He was commandant, government agent, district judge, and coroner. He traced roads, he planted coffee, and was one of the most energetic government servants in the island. The Kandians regarded him with superstitious veneration, and believed him to bear a charmed life, and the manner of his death was calculated to favour their idea of his being different from ordinary mortals. He was at a bungalow on the Hap-pootalle Pass one day during a thunder-storm. He stepped out and looked up to see if it were likely to clear. A lady and a gentleman, his travelling companions, were on the verandah. Suddenly there was a flash, and Major Rogers lay lifeless on the ground. Nothing could be found on his person to show where he had been struck, save a small spot on the heel, just below his spur.

A gentleman, halting for a night in the neighbourhood years afterwards, overheard an old Kandian telling of the famous "Major Rogers." He told of his marvellous feats, and how he could pass unscathed through imminent danger. "But at last," said the story-teller, "he cut down this forest that belongs to the Kattregam temple and planted coffee; then Buddha got angry, and killed him by lightning." There is a monument to his memory in Kandy church—a palm-tree in the pride of its beauty is smitten by a flash of lightning. In the distance is Adam's Peak. Beneath is inscribed, "Lo these are parts of His ways, but the thunder of His power who can understand."

There are many stories of his wonderful escapes. Among others, the following: One morning, after shooting five elephants out of a herd, he retired for breakfast under a tree a short way off, and directed one of his followers to go and cut off the tails of his victims. The man came back with three, and said the owners of the remaining two had vanished. Major Rogers thereupon went to see what had become of them, and soon saw one of them standing in the jungle, near the sandy bed of what was in wet weather a large river. As soon as the elephant saw the major he charged. The major fired and brought him down on his knees, but

he got up and again charged. The second barrel was fired, but without better effect, and it now became necessary to run to cover, across the bed of the river. The major ran, the elephant ran, and it became a question of life and death which of the two could run the faster. Once in the jungle and the sportsman would be safe. At length he reached the bank; another second or two—a few more steps—and he might take a shot at his foe; but, ere he could reach his cover, he felt a blow on his shoulder from the trunk of the elephant, and rolled heavily on the ground. He gathered himself up, and made a second attempt to get away, when another blow, another, and yet another from the merciless trunk dislocated his shoulder and broke his arm and several of his ribs. He then lay motionless, though still conscious, when the elephant began to play football with him, knocking him backwards and forwards between his fore and hind legs. At this crisis, one of his men who had heard the firing came up with a spare gun, and fired both barrels into the elephant; but this extraordinarily irrational beast, that would not lie quiet and die like a well-conducted elephant, now left his victim, and charged his second foe, who ran off into the forest and climbed a tree. Thereupon the elephant took post beneath it, but finding that the man did not come down, and remembering where he had left his football, he returned to the same place, no doubt intending to have another game with it. But the major had managed to crawl into the jungle, where he concealed himself as best he could. The elephant sniffed about and made search for him for some time, and at last trumpeted and went off. Major Rogers was carried into Badulla, where his wounds and bruises in due time healed; but, tired of inactivity, while one arm was still in a sling he borrowed a light gun, which he could bring up to his shoulder with the other hand, and therewith killed two elephants.

Some time ago a gentleman living in Galle heard of an elephant in a jungle about eight miles off, so he set out in pursuit. He soon came upon the marks of the elephant, and then upon the individual in person. My friend had never shot an elephant before, and knew nothing of going up the wind or other similar dodges, and the consequence was that he could not get a shot for ever so long. Every now and then when he got near, the elephant would walk on a little way; then he would stop, and just as my friend got near him he would go on again. This lasted from half-past nine in the morning to half-past three in the afternoon. At last the elephant got annoyed at being thus followed, and resolved to put a stop to it. So he went into a thick clump of jungle, made a circuit, and came back and waited for his enemy. My friend was poking about looking for the elephant, and wondering what on earth had become of him, when all at once he rushed out quite close to him with his trunk lifted ready to strike. My friend had not an instant to lose; he mechanically threw up his gun without taking aim, and fired, and down came the elephant as dead as a herring. In the

scrimmage his hat fell off. A fellow ran to the bungalow, where he had left his "ladye fair," awaiting his return in triumph, and announced the death of the elephant, adding, that he had knocked the master's hat off. The "appoo," or butler, in his interpretation, proclaimed that he had knocked the master's head off.

Two gentlemen were not long since out on an elephant-shooting expedition in which they had been rather successful. On their way home, one of them encountered an elephant; he fired and wounded him, on which the elephant charged. The gentleman ran for it, but his adversary overtook him; he fell, and the elephant stood over him. The gentleman had all his wits about him, and had time to ask himself, as he lay there, whether it was more likely that he would be pounded into a jelly, torn into pieces, tossed into the air, or kicked about like a ball. As he could not come to a satisfactory solution, he looked up at the elephant as if to judge from the expression of his countenance what were his intentions; when he perceived that the elephant was "dazed." The ball in his forehead had evidently confused his intellects, and he did not quite know what to do. At this juncture one of the sportsman's attendants came up and drew off the creature.

When an elephant is killed, all the carnivorous beasts of the field, and birds of the air, come together to feed on his remains; among others, the wild boar. A gentleman was one day looking at the carcase of an elephant which had been shot some days previously, when he observed a movement in the body as if it had been again imbued with life. For a moment he knew not what to make of this resuscitation, but the mystery was soon explained by a wild pig emerging from within the body of the elephant, where he had been taking his breakfast, and scuttling off as hard as he could run.

Some jugglers paid us a visit (in Ceylon) recently. Their sleight-of-hand tricks were exceedingly clever, when it is borne in mind that their arms and shoulders are entirely uncovered, and afford no such places for concealment as the sleeves of a European conjuror. From the means and appliances which the party brought with them, I saw they were going to perform the trick of which so much has been said and written, of putting a woman into a basket, killing her with a sword while within, and then bringing her to life again. I have now twice seen this feat performed, and confess it has on neither occasion struck me as being a peculiarly good one; very possibly I may have seen it performed by an inferior set of artists. The mode of operating is doubtless the same with all jugglers. A man orders a woman to make a salaam to a lady or gentleman looking on, or to do something or other, and she refuses, then an altercation begins, and at last he seizes her, and ties her up in a net; he then gives her another chance of obeying his behest, and, on her refusal, he pretends to be very angry, and sticks her into a wicker basket, and ties down

the lid; he then calls out to her, and she replies from within; he asks her if she will do what she is told to do; she still refuses; thereupon he seizes a sword and sticks it in every direction into the basket; he then calls again, but there issues no answer; he kicks the basket, and it rolls along as if empty. He affects surprise, opens the lid, and draws out the net in which the woman had lain; all the knots are unfastened. Then, after a while, the spectators hear a voice behind them, and, on looking round, there stands the woman smiling, and she makes her salaam voluntarily, or else she comes running from a distance. Now for the solution. The bodies of all Asiatics are pliable to a degree we cannot conceive without having seen it. On this very occasion these jugglers took a small child of about three years old, and laid it across a sort of crutch, on its back, and such was the pliability of its spine that it hung with its head and feet dangling on each side, as it would have done had it been laid across the crutch on its stomach. This being the case, it would not be at all difficult for a woman, accustomed to the trick from her youth, to coil herself up in a corner of the basket in such a way that the sword, when thrust in, would not touch her, and, by preconcerted arrangement, she would quietly move about, so that she was always at the opposite side to the place where the thrust was next to be made. Meanwhile, she would untie the net. When the lid was opened she would lie in a corner, and by practice would manage so, that when the basket was kicked she would assist in rolling it along as if empty.

But now comes the difficult part. How does she get out and come behind the spectators? It is on this that narrators have laid so much stress. They have said that such have been the attendant circumstances, that she could not have left the basket without their seeing her, or passing through a crowd of eager watchers. This is very likely, and possibly she does not leave the basket at the time. Perhaps the following may be the solution: It is not so easy to distinguish the features of Asiatics as of Europeans, and the mode of partially veiling the face and of arranging the drapery is such, that if two sisters bearing a strong resemblance to each other were to dress exactly alike, and wear the same kind of bangles, ankle ornaments, hair pins, and nose jewels, bystanders whose scrutiny had not been particularly directed in that channel, might very readily mistake the one sister for the other, and so, while looking intently at the basket, the sister who had not gone into it might slip up from some place a short way off, and lead spectators to believe she was the one who had been apparently killed in the basket. The jugglers to whom I now specially allude adopted a very clumsy contrivance. After the woman was "kilt and murdered entirely," they surrounded the basket with some canvas as a screen. I observed that one man was watching my eye very keenly; his part evidently was, to give a signal when my attention was diverted. Another man then asked us to see what

he was going to do. He went behind us on the verandah where we were sitting, and placed a large ring of metal on the ground. All of us naturally turned round to see what he was at, but as I had smelt a rat, I at once turned round again towards the basket, and was just in time to catch my lady bolting out from behind the screen and running off. Had I not seen this, she would have gone round the outhouses, and, while we were looking at the jugglers, would have come behind us and stood by the magic ring.

A NEW PAGE FOR THE CRIMES CÉLÈBRES.

WITHIN the last few weeks there has occurred in the south of France a very extraordinary criminal trial.

In the valley of Harize, within some three hundred yards of the village of Labastide de Besplas, from which it is divided by its own enclosed gardens, stands, surrounded by ancient trees, a building of considerable size, but falling into utter neglect and decay, called the Château de Baillart, or Baillard. The edifice, divided into several blocks, surrounds a court-yard, upon which open the doors of the entrance-hall, the kitchen and stables. At about seventy-five yards' distance from the château is another building, intended for the use of the principal servants of the house, but only the second set of stables which are attached to it look northwards towards the dwelling, the windows of the servants' apartments giving south on the high-road between Daumazan and Montesquieu. Amid the desolation of this half-ruined mansion had lived for many years its last proprietor, Monsieur Bugdad de Lassale, an old noble, to whose family it had belonged for generations. He had never married, and had reached the age of seventy-four, living in total solitude, in the midst of the most miserable penury and privations, though possessed of an income that, in those richly fertile regions, where the necessities and many of the luxuries of life are so cheaply procured, was considered as a large fortune. To conceal the fact of his wealth, the whole of which he kept in closets and drawers about the old house, seemed to be the chief care and anxiety of his life. He denied himself the most ordinary comforts; he suffered his house to fall into dreary disrepair, he pleaded poverty to every appeal for alms or assistance, alleging that he was obliged to save every penny to pay the portions of two old sisters, to whom he gave nothing whatsoever until shortly before his death: he even grudged, as it appeared, the expenses necessary to turn to good account his valuable lands, which, for want of proper tillage, yielded nothing like the harvests they were capable of producing. Aware of the danger of keeping this quantity of money about him, yet unable to make up his mind to invest, or place it in security, he lived in the constant dread of robbery, and kept everywhere within his reach

fire-arms, swords, sword-canes, and weapons of defence of various kinds.

In the house with him lived his three servants, Jean Lacanal, coachman; Pélagie Bycheire, housemaid; and Raymonde Bergé, cook. In the building already mentioned as near the house, resided a sort of farm-bailiff, grown old in the service, and his wife. On the morning of Friday, the 26th of February—note the date—the bailiff, on going to his work, observed with some surprise that all the shutters of the château were closed. Finding on his return at nine o'clock that they still remained closed, he went into the courtyard and called Pélagie; receiving no answer, he entered the kitchen, where no fire had been lighted, and thence proceeding to the stable, he found pools and splashes of blood, and in a dark corner a corpse, which he supposed to be that of his master. Raising an alarm, the maire, the curé, and the juge de paix were soon on the spot, and on further search being made the following details were brought to light. In the stable lay the body of Pélagie Bycheire, and in the wood-house close by that of Jean Lacanal, which had evidently been dragged thither from the stable. Proceeding into the house, there were found in the large room occupied by the two women, M. de Lassale, lying on his back, dead, and in one of the beds the fourth victim, Raymonde Bergé. Fearfully had the poor creature struggled for life; she had evidently striven to shelter herself by wrapping the curtains about her, for these were cut and hacked all over, and finally she seems to have tried to get between the bed and the wall, her body, from which the head was nearly separated, lying there, and the bed-clothes being marked with the muddy feet of the assassin, who must have clambered over to reach her. On this bed were found a moustache comb and a white pencil. All the corpses were horribly mutilated; the heads and upper parts of the bodies especially were literally hacked and gashed all over, as if the murderer had had a savage delight in indulging an unnecessary ferocity. The instrument used seems to have been a hatchet, or butcher's chopper, but it was not forthcoming.

Robbery was evidently the motive of the crime. A secrétaire and a chest of drawers had been forced open and rifled; and though it is supposed that in these M. de Lassale had at least two thousand pounds in money, none whatever remained, and on the floor lay several little bags, such as are used for holding gold. The robbers, however, whether satisfied with what they had secured, or unable to carry away more, had left untouched two closets in the same room, containing between two and three thousand pounds in gold and silver; nor had a further sum, of between forty and fifty pounds, been taken, nor had the plate been touched, nor some twelve hundred pounds concealed in the room of Jean Lacanal, and found after the preceding sums had been discovered. Horrible to relate, the murderers had carried up food and drink, and, with a wanton atrocity difficult to conceive, had chosen, of all the rooms in the house, that in

which lay the mangled corpses of their victims wherein to sup. The traces of their bloody feet (which do not seem to have been compared with the shoes of the two accused, or examined in any way) showed that they had escaped by the kitchen and by the avenue to the high road.

Suspicion at once pointed to a man who had passed some time at Labastide the preceding October: a stranger, of whom nothing was known. After a short absence he had returned in December, and was frequently seen in the neighbourhood of the Château Baillart, where, it was said, he had made himself acquainted with Pélagie Bycheire, whose lightness of conduct and habits of intemperance would render her an easy prey.

The description of this man seemed to tally with the appearance of one known by the name of Pujol, at Montesquieu, where he went every evening to buy bread, and whose strange appearance and manners had alarmed the baker's daughter who served him. On the 14th of February had been discovered, at five kilometres from Labastide, a hiding-place in the middle of a straw-stack, in which were a cabas, or sort of flat bag, a comb, and some other small objects comprehended in an *et cætera*. This cachette, supposed to be that of the strange individual who came every evening to buy bread at Montesquieu, being discovered, he made another, afterwards also detected, two kilometres nearer the Château Baillart. The description of the so-called Pujol was found in all respects to correspond with that of a notorious criminal, twice condemned at the assizes of Ariège for assaults and robbery of church plate, and lately pursued for having escaped from prison. Finally arrested as a vagabond under the name of Baubad or Boabad, he had related the most marvellous histories of his career with more than southern braggadocio. He was born, he said, at Mandchourie, of unknown parents, thence taken among the Caffres, who were at war with the Hottentots; taken prisoner by the latter, he was sold to a planter of Louisiana, named Gaston; escaping from slavery, he became a trapper, and after a hundred marvellous adventures by flood and field, he came to France, where, according to his own account, he was the victim of a series of unmerited persecutions, which had rendered him a vagabond and misanthrope, but, of course, wholly innocent of any evil in act or intention towards his persecutors. Arrested on the present charge, and finding that little heed was given to so apocryphal a biography, he acknowledged that his name was Jacques Latour, and casting off the mask of patient endurance, he burst forth into the most ferocious and cynical professions of hatred and enmity to the human race, and contempt for human life.

His appearance is described as presenting a mingled expression of cunning, ferocity, and ceaseless anxiety. His accent strongly Languedocian, his manner violently excitable, his flow of words excessive, and not without a certain

passionate eloquence; he wrote even better than he spoke, and after the commencement of the trial, rejected with insult the counsel named to defend him, refusing any assistance, and replying to the charges brought against him, often with great ingenuity, attacking the witnesses for the prosecution in the most furious language, and becoming at times so violent, that only the threat of removing him and judging the case in his absence could control him.

His plausibility, when he could exercise sufficient prudence to keep down his rage for boasting, was remarkable. To every accusation he had a ready and apparently sufficiently probable reply; but when removed from the court to his cell his passion for gasconade made him continually betray himself, and when reminded of his assertions in court, he would burst into fits of wild exultant laughter at the manner in which he considered he had taken in the court and audience, and relate story after story of his prison experiences, his escapes and his adventures, his life of a hunted fugitive among caves, woods, and mountains, mingling truth and falsehood into an inextricable maze.

The proofs brought against him were as follows: his antecedents; his having been seen about the Château de Baillart; the comb found on the bed of Raymonde Bergé, which was said to be the one, or *like* the one, known to belong to Latour (the pencil was not recognised); and the fact of his having, after the murder, a considerable number of bank-notes, with some of which he proposed to buy a field in the neighbourhood.

Strangely in contrast to Jacques Latour, was the second prisoner, Audouy, commonly known as Hercule Lutteur. A man of great size and prodigious strength, his appearance and manners, from first to last, indicated nothing but the most placid amiability, mixed with something of the dulness of comprehension not unfrequently attendant upon unusual physical force. He is said to bear a considerable resemblance to Alexandre Dumas; his countenance is indicative of perfect good humour and gentleness, his voice agreeable, and his antecedents had in them nothing to lead to any suspicion against his character. His profession had been that of a gymnast and performer of feats of strength, and in this capacity he travelled about the south, visiting the different fairs and fêtes, and known everywhere as Hercule, rather than under his real name.

A curious instance of the nature of the man is the fact that, when awakened from his sleep in the middle of the night by the officers sent to arrest him, he not only made not the slightest attempt to escape or defend himself, but calmly offered his hands to be ironed, without even inquiring the cause of his arrest!

And now, mark the evidence on which this man is condemned to hard labour for life. The murder was committed on the night of the 25th of February. Next morning, at seven o'clock, Audouy is declared by four witnesses at Foix, ten leagues, or about thirty miles from

Labastide, to have said to them: "Have you heard of the crime committed at the château near Mas d'Azil? Five persons (not four) have been assassinated." He seems to have entered into no further details, nothing is stated regarding his appearance or manner, or the condition of his clothes at the time spoken of, and three other witnesses assert that he was seen by them at Foix at five o'clock on the evening of the twenty-fifth. So, supposing him to have taken part in the crime, and that the report of both sets of witnesses be true, he must have walked thirty miles to the scene of the murder, aided in its execution, returned to Foix, washed, and changed his clothes, and been out and about the town of Foix, making no attempt at concealment, volunteering the news of the assassination, all within five o'clock in the evening and seven the following morning. Further, among the facts against him, he denied the statement that he had given some articles of clothing stained with blood to be washed, saying he had been bitten in the thigh by a dog, which, it appears, he really had been; but, seeing how a prisoner is browbeaten and badgered by the procurer, it would not be astonishing that, partly from confusion in the brain of a man of dull intelligence, partly from feeling that, even if innocent, such a point might tell against him, he should make such a denial; more particularly when we bear in mind the singular but undeniable fact which forms so noticeable a feature in nearly all French trials, namely, that witnesses in the most respectable positions, and with no apparent interest in being untruthful, are constantly found not worthy of credit on their oath: those pro and con, deliberately swearing to exactly contrary statements in matters of plain fact.

How Audouy obtained the intelligence is undoubtedly most unaccountable, supposing he really made the statement as asserted, but this merely rests on the evidence of one set of witnesses opposed to the testimony of the other. The last proof brought against him is the fact that, after the murder, he had a sum of money sufficient to purchase some animals from a caravan, in order to set up an exhibition of beasts fighting.

He has, throughout his examination, contented himself with simply denying the assertions of the witnesses on the two first counts. He declares that he was wholly unacquainted with Latour, who also ignores him, nor has it been possible to bring forward any proof of their connexion. It is particularly remarkable that though several times jeeringly attacked by Latour, and urged by him both seriously and tauntingly to confess, if he had anything to reveal, he still absolutely denied all knowledge of the affair; nor could the suggestion of the procureur-général—that if he had not helped in the murder, he might have known something concerning it; if he had not stolen the money, he might have assisted in carrying it away, in either of which cases he was assured confession would secure the utmost possible leniency—none of these considerations could induce him to

alter his ground. When hard pressed, he, with eyes full of tears, wrung his hands, exclaiming how could he confess? He would be only too delighted to give any information he could, but adding piteously, "Je ne sais rien! Je ne sais rien!" "I know nothing."

Listen to the procureur-général addressing the jury: "It is certain to us that this man (Audouy) has committed the crime, either as witness, as confidant, or as accomplice. He will not speak: it is for you, Messieurs les Jurés, to force him to speak; you have the means at your disposal." In other words: As we cannot prove his guilt, let us condemn him; perhaps that may open his mouth.

Finally, on the evidence we have stated, Jacques Latour was condemned to death, and suffered the punishment. As to the question of his guilt, it is highly probable that he took at least an active part in the murder, but we submit that the legal evidence was wholly insufficient to condemn him.

As to Hercule, we leave it to the impartial reader to settle the question as to even the probability of his guilt.

On sentence being pronounced against Latour, he exclaimed, "Vive l'Empereur! vive l'Empereur encore, et vive l'Empereur pour la troisième fois!" On being asked, according to form, if he would not appeal to the Cour de Cassation, his sole reply was, "Allez dresser la potence!" "Up with the gibbet!" Being conducted to prison in the same omnibus with Audouy, who entreated him to confess, he fiercely addressed him, "Eh toi brigand! parles, si tu sais quelque chose!" "And you, thief! Speak you, if you know anything." He dined with the utmost gaiety; seeing, at the end of the repast, soldiers enter with the jailers, he guessed that the object was to iron him, and he earnestly supplicated to have his limbs left free. Being told, however, that the orders were positive, he became so violent that they were obliged to pin him down on the floor, when he kicked the smith violently, bit one of the jailers, and finally had to be confined in a strait-waistcoat and laid on a mattress; mattresses being placed on either side of him and at his head, to prevent his dashing himself against the walls.

For five days he refused to eat, trying to bite a jailer who attempted to put food into his mouth. But he resolutely refused to believe that he was to be executed; it was, he said, all an "estratagème"—he had persisted throughout in considering every proof brought against him as a trap—spoke of his plans when he should be at liberty, and among these was one to the effect that he would get up a play, with the director of the Porte St. Martin, on his own adventures, to be entitled *La Victime et l'innocent Jacques Latour*. In this he was to play himself the principal part, and acquire glory and fortune for himself and the theatre. Later, however, he changed his mind on this point. "They will have a victim," he said; "let them." He entreated that he might be executed as soon as possible, to end his tortures. "Of a hundred

thousand men," he added, "there is not my like; the great tragi-comic drama is coming to an end." He composed a song, which he declared he would sing on his way to the scaffold. Never, at any time, did he flinch from the tone he adopted as soon as he perceived that his fate was inevitable. He rejected all attempts of the chaplain of the prison to bring him to any sense of the gravity of his position, sometimes declaring he was a Mahomedan, at others openly deriding religion and its ministers.

The rain poured in torrents on the morning of the execution, yet it in no way diminished the crowd; among which were a large proportion of women and children.

Arrived on the ground, Latour looked round with an air of the most indomitable resolution. From the door of the prison to the foot of the scaffold, he had never ceased to sing at the top of his voice the verse he had composed for the occasion. He looked at the couperet, or blade of the guillotine, without the slightest appearance of emotion, and then with a jaunty step ascended the stairs. On the platform he again began his song:

Allons, pauvre victime,
Ton jour de mort est arrivé,
Contre toi de la tyrannie
Le couteau sanglant est levé!

Laid on the block, he recommenced,

Allons, pauvre victime,
Ton jour de mort—

when the couperet fell, and all was over.

Setting aside the apocryphal stories related by Latour concerning his own career, there can be no doubt that his history has been such as can hardly fail to attach itself to a man of indomitable audacity, thirst for excitement, overweening vanity, fearless self-confidence, ferocity, and the utter absence of feeling or principle. Never was jail-bird more difficult to keep within bars. On the occasion of his imprisonment for the robbery of church plate, the last crime he was known to have committed, he was confined in the round tower of the old castle of the ancient Comtes de Foix: a place reserved for prisoners the most difficult to keep in security; and as even in the "lowest depth" there is, according to Milton, "a lower deep," Latour was confined in the most inaccessible room of the tower—that reserved for those condemned to death. Yet from here he nearly contrived his escape. He set fire to the iron-bound wood of the cell door, and it was nearly burnt through, when a piece of iron, becoming detached from the charred wood on the outside, fell off and rolled down the circular staircase, giving the alarm to the jailers. In his cell were found wooden skeleton keys he had made from a broomstick, and a piece of tin of the bowl in

which his food was left, shaped into a knife-blade, and sharpened on the stones. One of his chief anxieties was concerning a photograph taken of him at the time of the trial, and which his unconquerable fatuity made him desire most ardently to possess. Upon his being shown the photographs of three criminals confined in the prison of Pamiers, he immediately named them; which, if the proverb be true, does not look confirmatory of his theory of innocence, not only of the present crime, but of all those previously imputed to him.

Audouy has never ceased to maintain the attitude of amenity and submission he from the first assumed. It is singular that when he heard of Latour's condemnation and sentence, he said, "Et les autres?" "And the others?"

Various anonymous letters were addressed to the counsel of Latour, one of them notably from Baden, asserting his innocence and the guilt of another man not named. Several persons of Arbet, on the frontiers of Spain, declared that they had, at about the time of the murder, seen signal-fires on the most elevated points of the mountains, and that Latour had been recognised in company with two well-known malefactors of Ariège: these were imagined to have escaped across the Pyrenees, which Latour might easily have done, had not his recklessness induced him to remain near the scene of the crime, and his ostentatious braggadocio to compromise himself by his display of money and magnificent plaus. "Nous ne savons pas tout sur cette affaire." "We don't know the whole of this business," said the procureur-général, even after all the facts now known had been elicited. Yet, in the face of this uncertainty, the awful question is summarily concluded, the case is closed, and finally put away among the things of the past, and a man of whose guilt surely no satisfactory proof has been adduced, is sent beyond the pale of all human power of reparation. Audouy still lives, and, in his case, the possibility of rehabilitation exists.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER XXVIII. PRESENTED TO THE FERMOR FAMILY.

NEXT morning he was with the Manuels very early, and with a grave face demanded—though not in terms—a private interview with Violet. "My relations," he said, "are to be here to-morrow, and desire that you should be presented to them. As I need not impress on you how much depends on the first effect you produce on them, I may recommend you to be very careful how you behave."

When she heard this terrible news, Violet felt a shock. She had all along anticipated this dreadful ceremonial, and her little heart fluttered as if she had got a summons to the fashionable Council of Ten. If she had known of that fearful tribunal, she would, perhaps, have preferred it. She felt all "blankness;" her heart sank in, as though Fernor were the governor of the jail come to tell her that she must get ready for her scaffold on the next morning.

"Now," said Fernor, become suddenly like her spiritual adviser, "this is a more serious thing than you would perhaps imagine. Sit down, Violet." And he got her a chair, in which she placed herself, trembling, as if it were a dentist's. "You have not seen so much life," he went on, "and have been brought up differently. They have lived and had their being in the highest classes. Fashion is as the air they breathe. Naturally they are nice and critical, and have a different order of associations. They are very curious to see how you will behave, and how you will turn out; and the question is, how *will* you behave?"

Violet, who never thought how she would behave before any one in the world, and whose instinct in "acting" was her own simple heart, looked up wistfully at the dentist standing beside her, and said, sadly, "I don't—know."

"O," said he, gravely, "but we must *try* and know. I am sorry to see you don't appreciate how much depends on all this; you do not, indeed, Violet. I am really nervous about it myself; for there is a—a—and I would not say this to you, but for the gravity of the situation—a lightness, if I may call it, in your manner, a sort of rusticity, which I know would jar on

persons brought up as they have been. This is the rock I dread for you."

Poor Violet! whose voyaging had been a graceful pleasure-yacht in the sun and the smoothest of seas, to hear now of rocks! In sore affliction she did not know how to answer.

"Take time," said Fernor, gravely.

"O," she suggested, after a pause, and raising her eyes to him timorously, "I think if I were to be natural, you know—just myself——"

She stopped, for Fernor started back in alarm.

"Good gracious! no! Not for worlds! O, I see, my dear Violet, it is hard to get you to understand. You have not been trained to think, and it is scarcely your fault. So we must try and pull through as best we can." And having, as it were, extracted his tooth, with a hopeless air he prepared to go.

Seeing his resignation, and not knowing what to do, she came up to him helplessly. "O," she said, "if you would only tell me—teach me."

"O no," said Fernor, still resigned, "I have never found *that* to do. No, we must trust, as you say, to nature. Only I beg, I entreat, no spirits, no violent bursts of laughter. I know it seems bad to tell you this, but it is all for your own good."

Poor Violet! Bursts of laughter before *then*!

Fernor good naturedly made allowance, as for a child, and she saw this idea plainly in his face. He left her miserable; and then the idea of what had since passed out of her head—the "invalid girl"—came back. "She is not a child," she thought, "and can understand his instructions; and he respects her." Then with a weight of worldly trial pressing on her little brain, she went away to her room, and batted on her new-found miseries. Thus, we may say, on the whole, was the most gloomy day of her little life.

Restless towards evening, she asked her sister to come and take a walk. From her she received balm, and Gilead was poured abundantly into her wounds. They walked towards Brown's-terrace. Pauline almost laughed as she was told the particular woe of that sick girl. "If you torment yourself in this way, my poor child," she said, "you will fret yourself into a grave. They live next door to him, and a little civility is natural. Besides, he has told you that he has found them out to be low people, and has given them up."

"Yes," said Violet, half convinced, "I suppose so."

They were entering the terrace, when she drew Pauline back suddenly. "There he is," she said, hurriedly.

"Well," said Pauline, laughing, "we are not afraid to meet him?"

"No—not now—at least for a moment."

Fermor was coming out of his house, magnificent as a decorated Apollo Belvidere. He was smoothed; and brushed, and polished, and wore virgin gloves of the most delicate grey in the world; and the delicate grey fingers were closed delicately upon a packet of yellow-toned pamphlets—new works of the well-known Roger le Garçon school. In his button-hole he had a fresh flower. He passed out of his own gate, opened the next gate, went up the steps, and gave a dainty knock as if he were doing "a shake" upon the piano. Pauline, always ready with assuring doctrine, had not a word to say. Not in pale grey gloves, and with a flower at its button-hole, does the charitable Misericordia society visit its sick. Brother Fermor's "habit" was scarcely spiritual enough.

They had to think of other things. There was the Day of Execution fixed for the morrow, the awful presentation to the Queen-mother. Violet, agitated by her new troubles, scarcely slept that night, but tossed and rocked as if she were on the waves of a real ocean. The utter wreck of a night's rest is not much loss for a young girl; but, looking in the glass, which she did anxiously as soon as she had set foot upon land, she saw red rings round her eyes, and flushed spots upon her cheeks.

The great domed black boxes of "Lady Laura Fermor and suite," each with a coronet at the hasps, and wrapped carefully in a canvas paletot, had come down into Eastport, and had been got up-stairs into the genteel lodgings. Filtering the suite carefully, a residuum fell to the bottom, and resolved itself into one single maid, who was called Gunter. Gunter was delighted to get home again from what she called "Kuecs," but which was spelt "Nier," and which, as lying in a foreign land, and being in the hands of foreigners, she held, entailed a loss of caste in those who employed her. She professed many times her delight at finding herself home again in "a Christian country."

Fermor had been with them early on the morning of their arrival, and had been encreiored by cold arms. He was a little nervous, though he did not acknowledge it to himself; for he was, at least, outnumbered. The girls welcomed him with the artificial blandishments of fashionable affection, and talked to him and put questions as if company were by, and he was Colonel Silvertop, Grenadier Guards. They felt that this was acting, and they felt, too, the absurdity of it, but could not help it. Their voices would fall into the ball-room cadence, and were, perhaps, foreign to the original key.

"We are dying to see her," they always called Violet *her*. "I am sure she is like Lady

Mantower's girl, you used to admire so much." This was Alicia Mary's speech.

"You must make up your minds, my dears, to be frights near her. Even as a boy, Charles, you were the most difficile person in taste. She shall go out with us in Town, all jewels and lace, and the richest dresses. I like those stately queen-like creatures."

"O mamma, and she can take us to court, and we shall walk behind her, every one asking who that magnificent woman is?"

With his mouth expressing sourness, and some impatience in his tone, Fermor broke in. "I don't understand," he said, "you run on so fast. As for being a stately creature, and that sort of thing, she is a very nice unassuming girl; and as for those fine dresses and drawing-rooms, we shall be too poor to be thinking of such things. I couldn't afford it."

"I hope not," said Lady Laura, gravely. "No plebeian saving and scraping, I hope. Making a handsome show is not so dear a thing after all; and that ten or fifteen thousand pounds, for we are disputing how much it was you told us——"

"Ten, mamma," said Blanche.

"What do you all mean?" said Fermor, turning very red. "Who was talking of ten or fifteen thousand pounds? I wasn't. If you mean Violet's fortune, she has next to nothing; and," he added, with an attempt at generous emotion, "she doesn't require it."

"Well, be it ten, or nine, or eleven, you must make a show on it if you wish to get on. It is very little, my dear Charles; for your father always said you would want plenty of money to keep you alive."

"But," said Fermor, bluntly, "we had better understand this once for all. I am not one of your mercenary people. From the first, I said I never would look out for money. In fact, it always seemed to me a—sort of drawback, a kind of manufacturing thing. What I wanted was a person who would suit me exactly, and I at last succeeded in finding her. Violet," he added, looking round with a sort of pride, "will not have a sixpence of her own, literally not a sixpence."

The family looked from one to the other, with blankness mingled with contempt. Fermor saw their glances, and became aggressive.

"You," he said, "who naturally think the whole of life to be one long ball——"

"Hush!" said Lady Laura, calmly; "don't reproach *them*. You have not, I hope, let these people take you in? I am sure you are too sensible for that."

"Who says so?" said Fermor, sharply. "Perhaps that will be the next thing."

"Well," said Lady Laura, "you are old enough now, Charles, to know what is best for yourself. I tried to bring you up as well as I could to a certain age. The thing must go on now, and we must make the best of it. What time," added she, calmly, "are we to see your Miss Manuel?"

"O," said Fermor, constrainedly, "don't put yourself out. Any time to-morrow."

"You said to-day, I thought," said Lady Laura, coldly, and rising. "Now, my dears, we must get our things settled in this place. We have plenty to do. We shall be in all to-day, for I feel very tired."

Fermor went home chafing. "What a way they take things!" he said to himself. "Why should they be expecting this and that? I am sure I am old enough now to take my own course." But what really jarred was their resigned air of toleration; for he had expected banners, and bonfires, and acclamations, and general jubilee.

He arrived at Raglan-terrace in no very good humour. "Where is Violet?" he said; "please send her down, as we have no time to lose. Is she ready?"

Violet was up-stairs, but not ready. The final decorations were being pushed forward desperately. Nothing could be found, nothing was put on right or straight: agitated fingers tried to attach portions of dress to poor fluttering Violet's figure. The poor child had been bathing her face for hours, until it became all flushed and inflamed, and she had the wildness that comes from want of sleep. Every moment expresses came from impatient Fermor below. At last she came down.

He started back. "What *have* you been doing with your face? Good gracious, what is the matter?"

Violet came up to him timorously. "O, it is nothing," she said; "we have been in such a hurry, dear Charles. Let us go."

"But why hurry?" said he. "I thought that all this morning, *serenely*—Let me see you in the light. Heavens! Is there no eau-de-Cologne in the house? This is dreadful!"

"Indeed, *indeed*, Charles, I tried all I could. I have been bathing—"

"Ah, that accounts for it," said he, calmly. "And you must not mind if I make another remark—but it is too serious an occasion to stand upon trifles. That bonnet—*Where's* your little lace bonnet?"

"O," said her sister, standing by her side like a workwoman over a piece of work newly brought home, "this is a new one, just got home expressly," and she telegraphed a special appeal to Fermor to forbear further criticism.

He shrugged his shoulders. "Come, let us go. We must pull through as well as we can."

They went alone, for Lady Laura had said, "Please let her come without any of her other people. I really am not equal to it to-day. Later, of course—but please don't ask me to-day."

In truth, poor Violet was in the most unfortunate plight for presentation that could be conceived. On this day she had determined to be splendid, and the result was that she looked a thousand times better in her every-day dress.

As they went in, Fermor said, solemnly, himself sadly out of humour, "Please recollect all my instructions. I assure you, though I dare say you don't see it in that light, you don't know how much depends upon the next few moments."

Thus encouraged, Violet entered. Primness and austerity distributed over three persons welcomed her. Lady Laura rose upon her gauntly, and wound her thin cartilages about her. The "girls," with a set smile and faces cold as china, waited their turn.

"Sit down, pray do," said Lady Laura, looking curiously into her face. "I am so glad to know you, I am indeed." The others sat about and looked at her as curiously, taking her dress as their department. In utter confusion, and with Fermor's eye steadily on her, Violet could only murmur and murmur a little stupidly, when Lady Laura got out some fashionable platitudes and gave them to her, and then paused, waiting to hear how they would be acknowledged—Violet could only say she was "so kind," and "so—" an encomium that reached no greater maturity. She heard Fermor change his place in his chair impatiently, and her small forces fell into complete disorder.

Alicia Mary was busy with that unlucky bonnet, and Violet felt it. The conversation languished terribly.

"We must come to know you a little better," said Lady Laura; "if you have any spare moments, we shall always be delighted to see you. In time, you will have, of course, more confidence in me. Alicia, you will make out Mrs. Manuel's address; we shall be delighted to leave cards and make her acquaintance."

Alicia Mary and Blanche and Laura gave her a cold accolade, and said they supposed they should meet her during the season in Town, which they also supposed she found "delightful."

Violet, in a tone that seemed to deprecate any violence, said she didn't know. She was longing to be gone. Fermor abruptly stood up. He was angry, and saw that it had been unsatisfactory; yet, curiously enough, he was not so much angry with Violet as with his relations. "I don't want their patronising airs. I can do in spite of them." And as he walked away he relieved Violet's mind unspeakably, by telling her that she had done fairly, very fairly indeed. He fumed against them all the way home. But the breeze was not able to carry him further than that day.

CHAPTER XXIX. SIR HOPKINS EXAMINES THE GROUND.

ON the next morning, excited by a sort of curiosity, he went to see his family again, and said, with an air of unconcern, "Well, how did you find her?" Lady Laura, with an affection of ingenuity, sent out her daughters on various pretexts. "I did not like," she said, confidentially, "to speak of it before them. Now, tell me what time are you thinking of for the marriage. We shall, of course, try and meet your views in every possible way."

"O yes," said Fermor, "quite so. But you were satisfied on the whole?"

He saw that Lady Laura was kindly trying to avoid giving her opinion. "Don't be afraid," he said; "tell me candidly. I am not a boy now, you know."

"What is the use, now," she said. "*They* were more disappointed than *I* am. I am an old woman now. Seriously, my dear child, as you do ask me, what was over your eyes? I declare I thought I should have dropped when she came in. At first I was sure there was a mistake."

"But," said he, "don't you think her pretty? I know here she is considered the belle of the place."

"*Here*," said she, with a half smile. "O, that, of course. After your description and all, I really felt a chill at my heart. No manners, no style of any kind, not able to speak, and as for dress, my dear Charles, I lay it on you to speak seriously to her, for really it is not creditable."

How this criticism, which was in the tone of maternal condolence, affected Captain Fermor, may be conceived. He thought of it a good deal afterwards, and the remark about dress appeared to him specially just. Lady Laura seemed anxious to change the subject, so as not to give him pain. Sir Hopkins Pocock, she told him, would arrive in a day or so. "Seriously," she said, "you must lay your mind to making way with him. He is wonderfully inclined towards you, and said the other day you had the making of a diplomatist in you. He is to be a governor in a month or so, and I think could be got to take you out with him. He will have splendid appointments in his gift."

Fermor's face lightened. "I always thought," he said, tranquilly, "you should have put me in the diplomatic line. I should have done very well as an attaché. If I *have* a taste, it is for negotiation. I should be very glad indeed to go with Pocock."

He was, in truth, getting tired of arms, and its dull round, which presented no opening for a man of abilities.

"I will speak to him about it," said Lady Laura.

Sir Hopkins arrived the next day, plenipotentiary, as it were, accredited to a new country. He was seen perking down the street with an air of smirking surprise, as who should say, "Really now, this is very forward civilisation; quite surprising, 'pon my word." If he went into a shop, he seemed to go as an embassy to that shop, and prepared to negotiate a little for the article he wanted, as if he were dealing with the Waipiti tribe. At every turn something—really now—quite took him by surprise. He entered the principal bookseller's shop of the place, and negotiated out of him the leading persons then residing there. The principal bookseller had an inside room where two or three newspapers drifted about, and taking down Sir Hopkins's name with Lady Laura's, became impressed suddenly with respect.

"We are very full indeed 'now, sir," he said. "Colonel Gouter was in here this morning, and said he never recollected such a season. The bishop came only yesterday."

Sir Hopkins was surprised. "No, really? You don't tell me so? Now, is that the Bishop—of—cr—?"

"Yes, sir. Doctor Bridles. We have got

his lordship's Charge, which has made such a sensation. Got down six copies last week, and only one left."

Sir Hopkins was smilingly amazed. And so this was the Charge, really now? That was curious. Well, and who else, now?

"We never were so full. There were the Miss Campbells, and the officers, and Major Carter, who gave the little parties."

"Carter! Carter!" said Sir Hopkins. "What! Not an elderly man, with light clean face, and greyish whiskers? No. I should say not?"

"Why yes, sir," said the leading bookseller, a little mystified by this way of putting the thing. "Why, that is very like him. It must be the same. He has been in the best society. A great friend of Captain Fermor's, sir."

"O! That is very nice indeed. Come now. A great friend," said Sir Hopkins, setting his head on one side, and resting his hands on the rail of a chair, as if it were his perch, and about to drink.

"O yes. In fact, sir, they *say* that it was at his house that Captain Fermor's marriage came about. Is it not interesting?"

Then Sir Hopkins, having bought half a quire of note-paper, and not having subscribed to the lonely lee coast where the wrecked newspapers were drifting about, went his way pleasantly. This was what he called getting the lie of the ground.

Fermor thought a good deal over what Lady Laura had hinted. It diverted him, too, from other unpleasant reflections. "Really," he said to himself, "I begin to think Violet is only a toy—a very pretty toy—and she seems scarcely to think life can be a business at all." But he was pleased with the notion of the diplomatic opening. "The very thing for me," he said. "He is most likely of the old-fashioned school, and I will go out with him as secretary nominally—in reality as adviser and minister."

Major Carter, he felt, had a sort of little bill against him, and he thought he would settle it by a dinner at the mess. "No man shall say I am in his books," Captain Fermor added, sternly; and Major Carter came to dinner that very day.

Mess dinners repeat themselves; hundreds of impressions can be taken from the one mould. The mess dinner, the mess plate, the mess waiters, waiting as if on parade, the mess diners, and, above all, the mess itself, are all according to a "sealed pattern" kept at the War Office, and turn up in every corner of the empire, as undistinguishable as one regimental button from another. Major Carter, as crisp and short as thin Scotch cake, bathed pleasantly in these scarlet waters. He paddled conversationally among them, adapted himself to the "young fellows," and was pronounced, with serious military gravity, to be a man of uncommon knowledge. Wise Folly, busy with its pipe, shook its head with profundity at Wise Folly in the other lounging chair, and uttered thickly that Carter was a man that had read a good deal. A stranger is always welcome; for they had gone round and round over the dried-up

patch of grass they called their "mind," until they knew every corner of it by heart. Their wells, in which there was such brackish talk as horses, uniforms, my setter pup, and jolly cigars, had long been pumped dry. Heads turned eagerly to drink up the clear brook of Carter talk. And yet he was insinuating and deferential, and with skilful tact suffered Fermor to lead.

After dinner there came the little ante-room, the playground, where the youths could disport with tobacco and strong drinks. A few got out the card-table, and applied themselves painfully to the serious game of whist. Major Carter shook his head sadly as he was asked to take a hand. "No, no," he said. "What I know of whist was bought a little expensively. A very pretty corner of Carterstown had to pay for bad play. After that night I gave up. Ask General Muoro (then Colonel Muoro—he was there the whole night) if I did not bear it pretty well." There being now a promiscuous distribution of cigars, Major Carter giving in on one point, said, good humouredly, "Come, I tell you what, I will take a cigar. Thanks." When the cigars were lit all round, and the room seemed glowing like a coal country at night, Major Carter got very pleasant, and began to unpack some of the little worldly wares he had gathered up in his journey through life. He set before them ghostly dinner-parties, ghostly balls, little domestic farces, in which Sandwich, Lord Yokel's brother, who was humorously called by his friends Lobster Sandwich, from the colour of his face, figured. General—then Colonel—Muoro also had part in these recollections. More interesting, however, was it when Major Carter brought upon the scene a certain Maltese lady, whom he had met in garrison, "really one of the finest creatures in the Italian way" he ever encountered in the whole course of his life. "For myself," continued Major Carter, "I am not very much in *that* line; and men tell me such and such women are handsome, and of course I take their word for it. But really, when I saw this girl coming down the Strada Reale, literally lighting up the pathway, I confess I did feel ever so little curious about her."

The youths settled themselves to listen earnestly—for the least, the youngest not eighteen, may speak judiciously on this subject—when a mess waiter entered with a card in his hand, and said to Fermor, "That gentleman wishes to see you."

"Who can want me at this time? 'Sir Hopkins Pocock!' O!" the captain added, aloud, and rose to go out. He therefore did not see the curious effect of this name on his friend. Major Carter gave a scared look round from one to the other, and half rose too.

"Well," said Young Brett, breathless, "what did she do then?"

"Why then—" Major Carter said, abstractedly: "I must go now. Had no idea—so late."

A tumult of protest. "O, hang it. Confound it! Tell us about the woman."

"Must, indeed," said Major Carter, looking uneasily at the door. "Letters, you know. Good night—good night."

Meanwhile, Fermor was greeted warmly by his relation. "Just been up at your lodgings. Followed you down here. Don't know that I should know you, though."

"You must come in, my dear sir," said Fermor, with warmth; "we are just sitting after dinner. I asked a friend, Major Carter."

"Carter—Major Carter. Is he here?"

"O yes," said Fermor. "A sharp clever man of the world."

"Am sure he is the same—met him at Monaco. And a friend of yours. Come, I will go in and sit down for a few minutes."

As they entered, they brushed by the major, who was hurrying out, with his hat half way raised, as it were to catch a train.

"Good gracious! where are you going?" said Fermor, catching him by the arm.

"I *must* go," said the major, in a low whisper, still bent upon catching his train. "Please let me—business." Curiously, too, he spoke with his face to the wall, and turned away from Fermor.

"Major Carter, Major Carter!" said the diplomatist, with undiplomatic heartiness, "we have met before. You recollect *me*—Pocock? So glad. So very glad." And the diplomatic head was jerked on one side, and the diplomatic hand held out.

Major Carter slowly took a sort of under look at him, much as a dog does suspicious of his master, and instantly changing into the former crisp Major Carter that was sitting telling of the Maltese lady, became delighted to welcome an old acquaintance met with at Monaco.

"Sir Hopkins Pocock," said Fermor, introducing him to the company, "Major Dobbs, Mr. Slack, Captain Showers."

The hospitality of a cigar was promptly offered, and several open cases were proffered. Sir Hopkins chose one carefully, and smiled on them all round in return. His talk flowed on steadily in its thin stream; he never was at a loss, but to Major Carter he was specially attentive; appealing to him, and listening to him when he had appealed, almost with reverence. "Stay long at Monaco after I left? We had a very pleasant time of it. Recollect old Grimani from Naples, when he tore up my Times? They said he had lost fifty thousand francs that night."

And Major Carter, who had not seemed to recollect him well at first, and whose imaginary train had long since started, now became as an old friend of the liveliest memory, and a very delightful and genial old friend.

Fermor was pleased. "I always knew," he said sagely, next day, "that Carter was of the proper set; I can always tell by the ring of the metal." He was pleased, too, with his new relation. "Just the sort of man I required," he said; and presently had drawn him out of the crowd, now beginning to bet upon the whist party, and was talking to him gravely.

"They told me, sir," he said, "of your promotion. I am very glad of it. It requires peculiar gifts to govern. If you were thinking—as they told me you were—of taking with you any man of a peculiar turn that way, as secretary, or that sort of thing, I confess I should be very glad to go. *You* can understand that a man, who feels himself made for better things, and with ambition, must find himself rather thrown away in this sort of thing;" and he glanced round the room.

"O, of course," said the diplomatist; "quite so. And so you find this place dull? It seems to me pleasant enough. Do they ever give a ball or a dinner, eh?"

"O, I suppose so," said Fernor, carelessly. "I don't know, really. I am the worst person in the world to apply to. Of course, if you have chosen any one already, that is a different thing. But I *think* I could be of use; in fact, I am sure of it. Better, perhaps, than any one else."

"Ah, quite so," said the other; "no doubt. And the men here, how do you find them, now? Pleasant, I should say, for mere daily use—like roast leg of mutton, not a refined dish, but we have to come back to it."

"But *have* you made up your mind, sir," said Fernor, keeping to his point, "if I might ask directly?"

"Do you know," said Sir Hopkins, turning round on him, "you remind me of the old chief who was our stiffest card in the Waipiti. All our diplomatic forms were thrown away on him. My dear Charles, we will talk of this to-morrow."

Fernor, fretting at this cool reception of his proposals, which he always liked to be as promptly received as they were offered, said, ironically, "You have to make their acquaintance as yet, sir."

"No, no," said the diplomatist, smiling. "I have read a good many more men than I have books. For instance, that sunburnt man opposite, who made that comic remark about the halter of a horse."

Fernor smiled with compassion. "He never gets out of a circle much larger than a halter," he said. "Showers is his name. He is our professional jester!"

"Showers? Showers? I knew a Colonel Showers who commanded out in the islands, and headed the attack on the Pah."

"My uncle, sir," said Showers, "he was out there many years."

"Good gracious!" said the diplomatist, drawing his chair over to him, "how curious, how wonderful! He was my great friend, often dined with me at Government House. How *is* he? Heard from him?"

The diplomatist was so delighted at this discovery, that he addicted himself to Showers for the rest of the night. Showers, elated by the proud distinction, grew, as it were, rampant in his ardour, and threw out on all sides his Peenine jests, as they would be called in the old Roman History, being reckless enough, even, to level a shaft or two at the Fernor

Jove. But the face of the Fernor Jove wore an expression of deep pain and disgust, as he saw this strange preference. Later, something like this thought passed through his mind: "That the destinies of thousands of our fellow-creatures should be committed to a man who was so ignorant in reading the human mind! Surprising blindness! It made him sad."

Late that night they set out to walk home together. Major Carter and Fernor, with the diplomatist in the middle. At Fernor's gate they said good night, and Fernor went in. But he heard Sir Hopkins say in his cheeriest diapaason, "My dear Carter, give me your arm! Which way do *you* go? I want to have a talk with you over old times."

OLD, NEW, AND NO MUSIC.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II. AN ENGLISH FESTIVAL.

A RETROSPECT of what England has done without—what has been effected here in cultivation and enjoyment of music during thirty years past, offered as a companion sketch to a late glance at Germany—makes up a record as odd and as full of contradictions as can well be imagined. If in one or two provinces of the art we have made, as shall be shown, a progress which places us at the head of European nations, in others we have obstinately stood still—or, what is even less hopeful, have gone round and round in a narrow vicious circle, till all clearness of discernment has been lost.

To begin with our short-comings. The collection of these, at once depressing yet droll, which the story of so-called national opera during the last thirty years must register, would be large enough to fill three volumes post octavo. Thirty years ago, it might have been fancied that we were at the end of a transition period. We had just buried Arne's *Artaxerxes*, with its *Fly soft Ideas, fly, and In Infancy, and Water parted from the Sea, and The Soldier Tired*, and the wonderfully appropriate and sensible quartet, *Mild as the Moonbeams*, poked in by Brahms.—That was England's one classical opera which kept the stage;—and in which Miss Paton, the last of the Mandanes, was by patriotic faith held to be quite as great a singer as Catalani. We had done too, and seemingly for ever, with the ballad operas of Linley, and Shield, and Dibdin, and Arnold, and Hook, and Kelly, and Mazzinghi, and Reeve—spoken dramas full of pretty artless melodies, the like of which are not to-day to be procured for love or money, into the midst of which, every now and then, some prated Italian bravura or concerted piece by Galuppi, or Piccini, or Cimarosi, or Paisiello, figured, with a coherence little short of sublimity. Comical, indeed, were those domestic operas, with their benevolent farmer-fathers, and their rustic heroines who ranged the fields (as Boyce's duct from Solomon hath it) in satin shoes, and who, when weary of gleaning, thought nothing of calling for a harp into the middle of a harvest-

field, in order that Rosetta might, from her own milking-stool, also obligingly brought thither by a familiar in a smock-frock, accompany herself in O no we never mention Her!—Conical was the roaring nationality of our naval and military operas, by which their manufacturers, nevertheless, realised large gains. And yet, in these works, there was a real applicability to the untutored taste of the English people, a certain life not to be altogether despised. And, in one matter of some consequence, our fathers were better off than ourselves. The words of the songs were more frequently written by shrewd dramatists and skilled versifiers—had more distinct colour in them than it has been since thought necessary to try for. The nonsense and namby-pamby of the worst among them, could be exceeded by specimens which have been produced since the Great Exhibition year of grace, 1851. The best remain without an equivalent.

Something of a quality more musically substantial than the above characteristic productions, was promised by the playfellow of Mozart, Storace; who, though not averse (as was the fashion of the time) to laying hands on the operas of the continental composers with whom he had been conversant, had received a training more according to European form and order than any of the pretty melodists mentioned, and who might, peradventure, have founded English opera, had not his career been cut short at an early period.—That greater English composer who succeeded him, and supplied our stage, during a period when it was rich in singers, charming enough to have led, not followed, the public—Henry Bishop—exercised an influence on national opera, fatal in proportion to the amount of his genius, and the quality of his mistakes and compliances.—With greater energy of character, and a finer respect for his art, the composer of the music to the *Miller* and his *Men*, and of the *Shakespeare songs*—one who had at his command such enchantresses as a *Stepheus*, and a *Trec*, and such a tenor as *Braham* in his prime, might have made a deep print in England's musical annals—and left behind him permanent and lasting works—not merely beautiful fragments and indications hastily patched together. He had the good fortune, too, of having at his elbow a neat playwright, and a pleasing lyrist, in Mr. *Planché*. But he permitted every good chance to pass unimproved—every opportunity of gaining fresh and firm ground for dramatic music, to slip away under his feet. He respected neither his contemporaries nor himself. With power of appreciating and of equalling the foreign composers, whose brilliant and pathetic creations were unknown to the majority of the English (the Italian opera being still something like an exclusive luxury in this country), he deliberately allowed himself to garble, to arrange, to omit, to interpolate, in presenting their works, under pretext of naturalising them. To comply with the ignorance of unmusical managers, Bishop clipped, pruned, and patched the operas of his betters, even such men

as Mozart and Rossini;—and in his own creations showed himself too willing to wink at the harp in the corn-field,—at any nonsense, whatever its violence to probability, however so greatly at variance with dramatic character, provided the ballad pleased the gallery, and brought gold to the shop-counter. He had his reward in being jostled out of the English theatre by an inferior set of men, who knew a foreign trick or two more than he, perhaps; but “bettered his instruction” in the licences they permitted themselves, albeit pretending to a far higher musical completeness than was the order of his time.

Thirty years ago, however, for better, for worse, the taste for drama in Music—as distinguished from the play larded with ballads and glees—had fairly got hold of our public; and though we had still such melodists as *Horn* (whose *Deep, deep Sea*, and *Through the Wood*, sung by *Malibran*, are things to remember) and *Alexander Lee*, they were no longer sufficient for a musical stage, on which *Der Freischütz* and *Masaniello* and *Robert* had been produced, and had succeeded despite of the meddlers and manglers. We English were to have regular operas of our own making, which were to be as good as any *Sonnambula* or *Semiramide*. But our singers and our music-sellers would have their ballads still, and these stuck in becoming places—no matter what the suspense, no matter what the despair of the scene. And our composers did not shrink from laying hands on the wildest French drama done into ungrammatical prose cut into lengths, or on the busiest French ballet, demanding the mimic power of an *Ellsler* to carry it through. There is no need to draw out a catalogue of the productions thus poured out during one manager's reign after another, which no episodic flashes of talent and invention could save. Written on a false principle, without a feeling for style—feebly absurd in language, and affording the most adroit of actors no chance of expressing passion or illustrating a story—neither French, German, Italian, or British—it was impossible they should last. They have not lasted accordingly; and at the time present, when a new campaign is beginning, and the old chime about “native talent” is sounded in our ears, as if it was rung for the first time to-day, real English opera is still as much a thing to seek, as it was in the more innocent times of the harp in the corn-field.

On the other hand, in the matter of execution—the advance made during the past thirty years has been great and wholesome. Though we have had no such charmers as the ballad warblers of the first quarter of the century, who won their laurels so easily, though we have had only one distinguished operatic actress (in the last of the *Kemble*s), correctness in preparation has become the rule; and all that subordinate material which is indispensable as basis, has immensely improved in quality. A favourite ballad-singer would to-day be ashamed to boast (as I have heard done) that to learn correctly the words or the concerted music, or “the business”

of a new piece for the first night, was needless; so that his song was "safe." Our orchestra and chorus, again, have been worked up to an efficiency of which the Arnes, and Shields, and Dibbins, and Bishop—when he was writing Mahmoud, and the Slave, and Cortez, and the Fall of Java, and Clari, and his poor Aladdin, by way of challenge to Weber's *Obéron*—never dreamed. We may see, by-and-by, how this has come to pass.

England's progress in respect to instrumental music during the last thirty years is not less singular, inconsistent, and worth studying. Gain there has been, but not a tithe of what might have been expected. In one important section we have to admit retrogression. We have no longer a central instrumental concert on a level with those which are to be found in Paris and in Germany. Our Philharmonic Society,—which was in advance of its time in the days when it could comfort the heart of a Beethoven, by commissions which that unhappy man of genius ceased to receive in his own country, having there passed into temporary neglect and disfavour—when it could honour itself by bringing into immediate light the perfect promise of Mendelssohn—has, owing to mismanagement, favouritism, and the "mutual admiration system," carried to its highest development by well-meaning mediocrity, fallen back in the ranks. Its day of liberal counsels is over: its once skilful execution has become slovenly and expressionless. Its significance, in short, is gone; and nothing in the metropolis has taken its place. For enterprise, liberality, and research, for intelligence and spirit in performance, the lover of the best orchestral concert must now go to Manchester, where, thanks to the presiding influence of one spirited and thoroughly accomplished artist unhampered by the forcible feebleness of committee deliberations, the entertainment offered to the best and wisest connoisseurship is, of its class, unique in this island.

Thirty years ago, such love of instrumental chamber music as existed in England made little outward visible sign. It was stronger, however, than some might have dreamed. Our amateurs, among the middle classes especially—few, comparatively, as were their opportunities for instruction—form a company, whose curiosity, prescience, and honest enthusiasm have never had justice done them by those who have glanced at the subject: and for a simple reason. John Bull does not take to proficiency on any instrument kindly. Considering how adroit he can be with his hands and eyes, as a shot, as a whip, it seems, at first sight, strange that the neatness and readiness requisite for the management of strings or pipe, should, with him, "range at so low a figure." The patience of the German, the dash of the Frenchman, the instinct of the Italian, are not approached by him when the technical details of execution have to be mastered. But he must be cited as second to none in appreciation. It would be no bad story to tell, how from the recesses of

our shires to which communication was difficult—how from the hideously dull and prosaic streets of our manufacturing towns, an honest desire to enjoy and to enlarge the circle of their enjoyments, urged to those foreign cities, where instrumental music was then at its prime, men inexpert in foreign languages, and to whom the novelties of travel did not then, as to-day, come easily. There is hardly one great instrumental musician who could not have told how he was, at one period or other, approached by the sympathy or patronage of some such man. It is such men as these who "leavened the lump"—in the midst of which our Handel-worship, Haydn-worship, Mozart-worship, Beethoven-worship, Mendelssohn-worship, have successively been nourished with a constancy and an enthusiasm such as have no continental prototypes. That which Fashion, with its wasteful munificence and foolish raptures, has done for music in this country, forms no part of the present subject: because, during the last thirty years, at least, Fashion has followed rather than led the movement; and now resorts willingly where the people lead it. For years, however, the current of love for chamber music may be said to have been deepening and spreading underground. It has lately burst out to open day, and with a strength and brightness peculiar to this country. It is no fashion which holds thousands of listeners mute, whilst a Joachim handles the antique and vigorous preludes, chaconnes, and variations of Sebastian Bach; or while a Hallé sets himself to draw out, in all its delicacy, and depth, and charm of beauty, the full expression and meaning of one of Beethoven's wordless poems—for such are his Sonatas. That our vast London audiences enjoy the least showy and most intellectual works of art, is among the phenomena which the course of the last thirty years has brought about.

Thus much in scanty outline of some among our losses and gains: one which, if filled up and followed up, might include suggestions of some among the reasons why the progress of creative music in England has been so timid, so imitative—so much more a matter of form than of fancy. Seeing that our Tennysons do not try for the melodies of any other country; that our Brownings can discover harmonies as recondite, and sequences as intricate as those combined by the subtlest poetical transcendentalist who ever tried to methodise his dreams, in Germany or in Italy—we might have looked to the swarm of clever English musicians, which has been busy in creation during the last thirty years, for something better than second-hand inspiration, for some individuality of style and humour. But we must have looked only to be disappointed—only to find operative reminiscences in plenty of Adam, and Auber, and Mercadante, and Rossini's ornaments, and Verdi's violences—or symphonic ones of Spohr and Beethoven, and most and newest of all (to a wearisome satiety) repetitions of Mendelssohn's mannerisms—not of his mind.

We are now coming to the point of retrospect

and comparison, on which it may be well for those to fix attention who desire to ascertain really where England stands among musical nations—namely, “the music meeting” or festival, which Handel established as one of the institutions of this country,—and at a period anything but auspicious. For then, between the precepts of the Puritans still at work in those of a second and third generation,—and the sarcasm of the Wits, our love of music, yet more our participation in its production, had sank to being largely considered as a discredit to men, and a foolish waste of time among women.—It is no light tribute to the power of Handel’s mighty poems, unequal, full of plain transcripts from works already known, hurried out with haste, yet alone in their sublimity—a series which, in their world, bear a curious and close analogy to the plays of Shakespeare—that they spoke at once to ears so ill prepared to hear as those of England at the middle of the eighteenth century. Coarsely flung down on paper as they were,—so many expedients of an unsuccessful man, far advanced in life, to retrieve his fortunes,—they were coarsely and insufficiently performed.—The Master can only have heard them with his mind’s ear;—so inadequate were the choral and orchestral provisions of his time to do justice to his Hallelujah, to his plagues in Israel, and that unsurpassed song of Miriam’s triumph by the Red Sea. Though the court favoured them, the public was not on kindly terms with the court. They had nothing to make their way in England, but their innate power and glory, and the complete satisfaction they brought to England’s musical wants. And accordingly, very shortly after they were produced (the rate of intercourse in those days considered) they became as “household words” in certain of our counties—those betwixt the midland and the borders of England especially. They got into the dales of Yorkshire, and the manufacturing villages of Lancashire and Staffordshire. And to produce them, groups of scantily tutored voices, by nature singularly stout and well-toned, gradually combined themselves into choirs so efficient that their fame was noised abroad. These first Lancashire and Yorkshire performances of Handel must have been quaint indeed. Men, not yet very old, have learned their love of The Messiah, and Samson, and Saul, and Jephtha, and Judas, in some mean ill-lighted dissenting chapel of town or country. How hearty were those honest little music meetings, with all their flaws and defects! with perhaps only a bassoon, a bass-viol, a double bass (and, by way of luxury, sometimes a flute), to help out the organ. I have heard no such trebles anywhere else—so strong, so untiring, and yet so sweet. The voice seemed to run in families, and the best voice of the family—not seldom the mother—would on these occasions represent the Banti, or Billington, or Mara, who took the principal *solo* duty in London.

These good people became so renowned, that they could not be dispensed with in London at

the playhouse Lent Oratorios—so pleasantly commemorated by genial Mr. Henry Phillips, in his late Recollections—and (more august honour still) at the Ancient Concerts. Thirty years ago, when the last mentioned orthodox entertainments were dying of their somnolent grandeur (Hogarth’s scene of a Sleeping Congregation being nightly performed on empty benches, except when the Duke of Wellington was Director for the evening), the chorus was led by these women from Lancashire, brought thither by coaches some twenty-eight hours on the road; the Middlesex voices being then rejected as insufficient, and of disagreeable sound.

Besides the centres of popular activity referred to, “the Music Meeting” had a hold in every cathedral town, which maintained its choir, and was surrounded by resident families, with whom a visit to the pleasures of London was then a rare treat. Especially to be mentioned among the oldest festivals, are those of the Three Choirs, Hereford, Worcester, and Gloucester, which, in their day, did good service as keeping alive some taste for high art. The soil, then, throughout England, was more or less ready for the increase of cultivation, which has developed itself, within the period referred to, in so remarkable a manner.

This began to quicken in London, under the auspices of some amateurs, who, before “Young England” had begun to sentimentalise on the right of labour to have some pleasure, took the matter fairly into their own hands: amateurs, busily engaged during the day, at the desk, and at the counter, having small leisure for the practice of instruments, but a great desire to sing. Without high patronage, without any great pretence, the Sacred Harmonic Society was founded in the Strand, at Charing-cross, and St James-street; at first its audiences were principally confined to a circle made up of the friends of its performers. The Ancient Concerts died, and well it was they did so, of their own dullness. The public had got past Lenten oratorios at Drury Lane and Covent Garden; where the Death of Nelson and Total Eclipse jostled each other, when the Miriam of Israel had to sing Cherry Ripe, and I’ve been Roaming, and the long farrago of medley music was wound up with a Hallelujah. Thus, in spite of manifest imperfections in performance (which were amended as prosperity brought counsel, not insolence, with it), the lovers of serious music began to find their way to Exeter Hall, though the music meetings there were presided over by no royalties, nor archbishops, nor cabinet ministers;—and the undertaking having a healthy root, and being sagaciously watched over, has grown to what we have seen it—a society after its kind unparagoned in Europe.

Simultaneously with the establishment of the Sacred Harmonic Society, another movement began in so many different quarters, and under so many distinct auspices, as to make it clear that the movement answered, if indeed it was not created by, a popular necessity. Half a dozen teachers of part-singing, working on the

imported schemes of Mainzer, Naegeli, Wilhem, or some methods of their own, broke out into a sudden activity, warranted by the number of those who crowded to them for instruction. There was, of course, some empiricism in the royal promises of the projectors—no lack of controversy, criticism, and recrimination among those recommending rival methods;—and a brisk outbreak of that false fashionable sympathy, which is sure, more or less, to be followed by collapse;—but the amount of good done, and knowledge spread, and interest excited, is not to be over-estimated. The same tale was told on every side, in every world of society throughout the kingdom. And the result is, that whereas London was of old perforce indebted to the sweet singers of Lancashire when a chorus was wanted, it has now its own thousands of singers apt and able to take part in any celebration which may be preparing. The question has come to be one of picking and choosing. And remarkable it is, to have seen how, by the diffusion of cultivation, the quality of the material has been affected. Though the North still retains prominence in the natural richness of its vocal tone, the vast improvement in every other district is not to be overlooked: a fact partly to be ascribed to the widening of the ranks of the amateurs, which necessarily must have its refining influences. Certain it is, that in the Eastern Counties they sing no longer with vowels twisted out betwixt closed teeth—that beneath the sound of Bow Bells, the cockney twang is to be heard no more. Though the Germans shake their heads and know better, there is no help for it! The English are now a great singing people.

Then, progress has come in the midst of much folly and false endeavour, from what may be called the ecclesiologists; the same who have taken art and ceremonial, as connected with our national religion, into over-care. With the excess of their theories and practices however (if excess there has been) we have nothing to do here. They have meanwhile, no doubt, most essentially raised the tone of parochial singing, and the taste for sacred music throughout England. There is now hardly a cathedral in which some great assemblage of local voices is not annually held; and, to meet the uses of these gatherings, a school of simple and broad composition appears to be rising up, which may tend in giving us something as devoutly noble as the great unaccompanied music of the Romish Church, without any dry or affected attempt to drag into the service such barbarous echoes from the world of Paganism as “the tones,” which, some twenty years ago, were to be forced, testwise, on all who professed to talk of chants, or anthems, or hymn tunes.

Almost from the first moment of the establishment of these “Music Meetings,” that of the town of Birmingham has filled a conspicuous place, and been distinguished by its liberality and excellence, and the admirable discipline with which it has been administered. As the centre of a district rich in

opulent patrons, within reach of two or three of the cathedral towns capable of lending it aid, the capital of Warwickshire, though not gifted with choristers in any proportion to Burnley, or Rochdale, or Oldham, managed, before the close of the last century, to attract the attention of England as a place where once in three years the grandest music was to be heard on the grandest scale. There is no taking up the memoirs of the Lichfield and Derby set, which included accomplished men of art and letters, and that fantastic but not stupid blue-stocking, Anna Seward, without perceiving that before the close of the last century the Birmingham Festival had become an institution of the county. A steady principle of management seems to have been early adopted there and perfected. Thanks to the research and enthusiasm of one or two of those amateurs, who have been mentioned as so characteristic of England, not only were the then new works by the lights of German music brought forward in alternation with those of Handel, but the best men were invited to give a special importance to the Festival, by writing with an express view to performance there.

It seems at first sight strangely discouraging that, our English productions being so strongly in favour of the sacred cantata or oratorio, we English should not as yet have been able to produce one work of our own which can keep its place; and this not for want of trial, seeing that successively Boyce—whose Solomon contained two vocal pieces long admitted into sacred concerts, softly rise, and the duet of Together let us range the fields; and *Florimel*, Greene, and Arne, and Stanley, and Battishill, and Dr. Worgan (with his Hannah), and Crotch (whose weak and eclectic Palestine gives another proof of how disappointing an artist a prodigious boy may grow into), tried their best and proved wanting. It is among the regrets which belong to the incomplete career of one of the greatest musicians this country has ever possessed, that Samuel Wesley did not leave it an Oratorio. That there is a stuff in his sacred composition rare in any country was made excellently clear only the other day, by Mr. Henry Leslie's disinterment of his eight-voice psalm, *In exitu Israel*—one of the finest combinations of strict and imaginative composition existing in the library of vocal music.

But, it may be urged, in this most difficult branch of composition, the German musicians have not been much more fortunate than our own. Their land has only four great names, thus examined. There are the stupendous, but somewhat impracticable works of Sebastian Bach—a strange compound of the most colossal genius, the deepest-rooted science, with formal tediousness. There are the oratorios of Handel, never heartily loved by the mass in Germany, though appreciated by Haydn (who was inspired to write his Creation by hearing them in England); by Mozart (whose studies in the form of additional accompaniments to The Messiah, Alexander's Feast, and Acis, are so many mas-

terpieces);—lastly, there are the two oratorios, *Psalm* and *Lobgesang* of Mendelssohn. If Beethoven's *Mount of Olives* be heard from time to time, it is because it was Beethoven's; regarding whom the world has agreed to be idolatrous without question. His great sacred music is to be found in his two Masses. Spohr's oratorios have already passed into the outerlimbo of oblivion, because of their mannerism and want of idea. Meyerbeer, that most sagacious of artists, felt the difficulty of the task too intimately even to be seduced into this form of creation, though tempted again and again. The few honourable and careful efforts made by living men (whom there is no need to name), are hardly destined to the honours of permanent life.

England's great midland Festival, at all events, has from the first done its liberal part in endeavouring to widen, not to narrow, the list of pleasures. It will not be forgotten that the one only oratorio since Handel's and Haydn's which can justifiably rank with theirs, *Elijah*, was produced at Birmingham: on one of those days which mark a period in the life of every one concerned.

That this Birmingham liberality indirectly brought about one of our most important musical benefits during the last thirty years, remains to be told. More than thirty years ago, an invitation was sent to Zingarelli of Naples—best remembered here as having framed the *Romeo* in which Pasta acted and sung, but in Italian repute as a sacred composer—to compose some new work to England. His contribution when completed was entrusted to the care of a young Neapolitan student totally unknown, and whose destination was said to be that of a singer: who brought the motett to Birmingham, and sang there without success. From a beginning so obscure and unpromising, who could have augured a career which will live in history as one of the most remarkable, honourable, and peculiar ever led by European musician? Yet such—as the career of the greatest conductor we have ever possessed—began, continued, and followed out in England alone, in the teeth of disinclination, class jealousy, and national prejudice, has been that of the conductor of the last Birmingham Festival—Mr. Costa.

It is even yet too little understood that the peculiar attributes which go to make a great conductor of music, are among the rarities of art. The number of those really admirable in this capacity (as distinct from composers) who have appeared during the last fifty years, could be told on the ten fingers. The most eminent among the dead, perhaps, were Habeneck of Paris, Gühr of Frankfort, and Spontini at Berlin (when presiding over his own operas). Among the living may be named M. Berlioz (when he is acquainted with the music under his care); Herr Rietz of Dresden (when the work has not the misfortune to be an Italian one); and Signor Mariani of Genoa. When Mr. Costa took up the conductor's bâton at the Italian Opera during

Mr. Monck Mason's one year of lessceship, the office there, as it were, had to be created. The old conductors had sat at the harpsichord, or else had figured away with the violin bow. The choruses in the theatre were traditionally wretched and out of tune, and never dreamed of action; the orchestra was better or worse as chance might please, the main weight of the performance lying on the interest given to the music by the principal singers. It will be seen, then, that no common amount of aptitude, patient study, energy, enthusiasm, and that moral influence without which discipline alone becomes despotism, were required; no common clear-sightedness as to the necessities, but also the latent means, of this country, to raise a nameless youth, step by step, to a supremacy in the management of music in every form—regarding which there is no longer possibility of contest, and which has compelled stupidity and envy to take the safe refuge of silence.

What the presidency of such an artist wisely exercised during a time of transition, and over materials such as have been imperfectly enumerated, can do, was to be heard a few weeks ago at the Birmingham Music Meeting,—in the general excellence of performance unapproached by any in my experience. The sacred music included the *Messiah*, *Elijah*, the *Lobgesang*—these produced without rehearsal! (to such high point of attainment have our performers reached)—the superb music scene from *Solomon*, Beethoven's *Mount of Olives*, Mozart's disputed Twelfth Mass, St. Paul, and Mr. Costa's own new oratorio, *Naaman*. In particular must the two last performances be dwelt on; that of St. Paul as a model of grandeur, spirit, expression, and sobriety, unapproached, it may be fearlessly averred, by any previous rendering of the work, even when its admirable and too early lost composer was there to animate every one by his presence. The scene of the burial of St. Stephen, with its funeral chorus, thus rendered, is one of the most precious possessions which musical memory can have to keep.

It would be only fair, as further illustrating the remarkable excellence of an English festival of the present, as compared with that of a German meeting of the future, to offer some analysis of the new works produced at Birmingham:—to speak of the dignified and thoroughly artistic oratorio by Mr. Costa, just mentioned, excellent because of its Italian style without Italian flimsiness; and to dwell on the ability shown by Mr. Henry Smart in his new *Cantata* on an Irish legend, and the admirable treatment in Kenilworth, a masque, by Mr. Sullivan, of a scene from the *Merchant of Venice* (new showing as his *Tempest* music had already done, that though the youngest he is our best English illustrator of Shakespeare); but this must be left to other hands. Enough has been said to prove how well England may be satisfied with her executive progress during the last thirty years, so magnificently and triumphantly

expressed, in the great midland music meeting;—and to point out wherefore there is good hope that this country too, may, during a similar period to come, add to the general store of works of art; something created of its own, which shall belong to the Past, by the reverence to known truths displayed; to the Present, by its national fitness and employment of our peculiar resources; and thus have a good hope of living into that Future which awaits all real individual effort, whatever be the world of imagination in which it is exercised.

QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD. CHAPTER LVIII. A DISCOVERY.

POMEROY'S in Great Grand-street was an hotel much patronised by persons from the Eastern Indies—officers home on sick leave, dark-skinned princes, who wore earrings and jewelled caps, and who, standing at the windows in a blaze of diamonds and brocade, seemed to be perpetually waiting for cabs to take them to a masquerade; by maharajahs, begums, governors-general, judges of the supreme courts, and millionaire merchants returned to their native land, with the fond design of enjoying the fruits of their long labours without livers to help the process of digestion.

PomeroY's "had itself out" for this particular class of patronage. Its apartments were furnished with great magnificence, displaying much gilding, embroidery, and yellow silk; it had suites of private rooms adapted for every variety of social habit, and for the practice of every form of Eastern religious observance; it provided separate rooms for various castes, nicely discriminating as to the requirements for different manners of eating, smoking, praying, and taking the bath; it had kitchens for all sorts of cookery, Christian and Mahomedan, Brahmin and Hindoo; clean and unclean.

PomeroY's was a very expensive establishment to stop at; and this was one of its chief recommendations to the Indian magnificos who patronised it. By taking up their residence at PomeroY's, they proclaimed to all their friends and to the public at large, through the medium of the Morning Post, that they were very rich, and consequently very important, personages. The frequenters of PomeroY's would not have been content to accept the same accommodation elsewhere for less money. What they chiefly took a pride in was the fact that they paid an exorbitant price for everything they had. If any visitor after a week's residence at PomeroY's had received a bill for such a modest sum as ten, or a dozen pounds, he would have resented it as an insult to his dignity. He would have suspected at once that he had been badly served; that they had given him inferior curry to eat, inferior wine to drink, inferior chairs to sit upon, and an inferior bed to sleep in. What was the object in going to PomeroY's? Was it not to

be able to eat five-pound notes and drink sovereigns!

Such was PomeroY's Hotel, of which Jean Baptiste Constant was the manager and nominal proprietor.

Constant, sitting in the mourning coach with Lily, on the way to Great Grand-street, opened a conversation with the view of preparing her for her new life and her new prospects. He began with some hesitation, for he had to tell her first of all about her father. Lily had remained, up to that moment, ignorant even of her father's name. She had continued to call herself, and to be called, Lily Floris. She was to know now that her name was Blunt.

"And, my father?" she said, inquiringly; "all that I have heard of him is, that he ill-treated my mother, that he was a bad man, and very poor—a beggar. Was he a beggar?"

"Your father, Lily," said Constant, evading a direct reply to the question in this form, "was a gentleman."

Francis Blunt was all that the countess called him, a cheat, a scoundrel, and a beggar; but from the valet's point of view he was still a gentleman.

"More than that," Constant continued, "your father was a member of a noble family of high descent and great wealth; and you, as his child, Lily Blunt, are a lady."

Lily felt a strange fluttering at her heart. It was not pride; it was scarcely joy. She was thinking of Edgar. Did *he* know that she was the daughter of an English gentleman?

"It is possible," said Constant, "that you may shortly meet some of your English relative, and be elevated to the position to which your birth entitles you. I have been searching for you for a long time, with the view of making you acquainted with your position, and, if possible, rescuing you from the misery which you have so long endured; but until chance took me to the circus at Ranelagh I failed in every endeavour to discover you."

Lily thanked him from the bottom of her heart. In the midst of her misery and desolation, she had never dreamt that any one in the wide world was thinking of her. If she could only have known it, her heart would not have been so dead to all hope.

Constant continued:

"It is my inclination, no less than my sacred duty, Lily, for I love you as if you were my own child—it is my dearest wish and desire to see you restored to your family; and I will do everything it is possible to do, with that object; but if I should fail—if the hope which I entertain should be disappointed—will you let me be your guardian, your protector, your father?"

He implored her eagerly, as if he were afraid of being met by the proud and scornful spirit of her mother.

Lily, whose heart was overflowing with gratitude, put all his doubts to flight at once. She seized his hands, and kissed them fervently.

"Heaven bless you!" she said. "I desire nothing better than to be your daughter, to tell

you all that lies at my heart, and to ask for your advice and guidance."

In all his lifetime, Jean Baptiste Constant had not experienced so pure a joy as at that moment. He felt a tremor of delight run through his whole frame. His heart, long since frozen up, melted before the sunshine of the girl's trusting, loving face, looking into his and calling up a bright vision of the past—his eyes filled with tears, and the strong, hardened, man wept.

"God bless you!" he said; "those words have given me the first thrill of real pleasure I have ever felt since your mother was a girl, such as you are now, in the little village of Marouille, in France, where I first saw her."

Constant stopped the coach at the corner of Great Grand-street, got out with Lily, and walked the rest of the way to the hotel. He paused as they were about to enter the house, and said:

"You will not forget that your name is Lily Blunt."

As Constant passed through the hall with Lily to his own private apartments, the situation and its attendant circumstance carried him back to his old life at the Lilies of France, to that time when Valérie was budding into beauty, and stirring in his heart the flame of love long since quenched. A sigh escaped him as he thought of those days of hope, but the remembrance read him a lesson.

After Lily had partaken of some refreshment and rested for a little in the handsome sitting-room behind the bar, Constant, who had been attending to the affairs of the hotel, returned to the room, and with considerable hesitation and mystery of manner, requested her to perform a service.

Lily jumped up eagerly, and expressed her willingness to make herself useful to her guardian in any way.

"I long," she said, "to be employed, to have something to do, and if you will only let me be your servant—"

Constant stopped her.

"You forget, Lily, that you are a lady," he said. "I have no idea of making you a servant; but on this one occasion will you oblige me by—"

Lily interrupted him with an eager offer to perform any service he might require.

"Well, listen," he said; "you shall be a chambermaid for once, and take up this glass of elder-flower water to the gentleman in the blue room. Come, I will show you the way."

Lily took the silver salver from his hands, and followed him to the foot of the grand staircase.

"It is the second room on the first landing," he said. "Knock at the door before you enter."

Lily ascended the softly-carpeted stair, and proceeded as directed to the second door in the corridor. She knocked gently and timidly. There was no answer. She looked round and saw Constant standing at the foot of the stairs, watching her. She knocked again, and this time a feeble voice called "Come in."

Lily opened the door and entered the room.

It was a magnificent apartment furnished in blue and gold, with many ottomans and couches, covered with skins and richly-embroidered cloths, and, for the moment, Lily was so dazzled by the splendour of the fittings, and her vision so lost in the vastness of the room, that she failed to discover the occupant who bade her enter. At last her eye was attracted by a movement on one of the couches, and on advancing further into the room, she discerned the figure of a man reclining upon a heap of pillows. He was an old man with grey hair and a very sallow complexion.

Lily went up to the couch with the salver in her hand, and offered him the goblet of water. The old man turned to take it; and, as he did so, looked up in Lily's face. His outstretched hand suddenly fell by his side, and he uttered a cry of surprise.

"Again that face!" he exclaimed; "again that bright vision that I have seen so often; in life twice, in my dreams many times."

He passed his hand across his eyes, as if he were doubting his senses, and imagined that he was dreaming then. At length Lily spoke.

"I have been desired to bring you this, sir," she said, stooping towards him with the goblet.

"Then it's not a dream this time," he said. "Who are you? Come nearer; let me touch you."

It was now Lily's turn to be startled. She hesitated, and retired a step, timidly.

"Don't be alarmed," he said. "I'm only a poor, weak old man; old before my time, my dear. Come close to me, and let me touch your hand."

He spoke kindly and tenderly; and Lily, dismissing her foolish fears—for he was, as he said, only a poor, weak old man—advanced to the couch and held out her hand.

The old man took it and held it between his own cold palms, and peered into the girl's face curiously.

"The same blue eyes," he muttered, "the same soft brown hair, just as I can remember them—just as they are in the picture. Ah, you are a bonny, bonny lass, just like her, just like her. Thank you; it's very kind of you to come up; come again, my dear, come again. Stop, you may as well tell me your name."

"My name is Lily, sir."

"Lily, Lily," he repeated. "Ah, that is a pretty name; and what else?"

"Blunt, sir," Lily replied.

The invalid, who had been reclining so languidly upon the couch, apparently without the strength to turn himself, started at the word, and sprang to his feet.

"Blunt," he exclaimed, "Blunt! Am I dreaming, or—or are you playing a trick upon me?"

Lily scarcely knew what to reply to these inquiries. Who was this old man, and why had the mention of her name so strangely excited him?

The invalid sank back upon the couch again, and sat gazing at Lily with a child-like wonder.

"Tell me," he said, "who are you? Who

was your father? Was he Frank Blunt? Eh? eh?"

"I believe so, sir," Lily answered.

"You believe so," he repeated; "you believe so. Don't you *know* who your father was?"

"I have been told that my father's name was Francis Blunt."

"You have been told so, and don't know of your own knowledge. That's odd—very odd. And how did you come here, my dear? How did a Blunt come to be a servant in a hotel?"

"I am not exactly a servant, sir," Lily replied.

"Not exactly a servant!" he said. "Then what are you? I don't understand it; it's all a mystery, a puzzle. Here, Franz, Franz, Franz Stimmi, you rascal, come here."

It was clear that Franz Stimmi was a party to Constant's plot, for he entered the room immediately his name was called.

"Come here, sir," said the invalid; "do you know this young lady, or anything about her?"

"Yah mein signor, of course I knows dat young leddi; she is the liddle cal, ver mooch grown big, vat we see in de steam-boat. Ah," the courier continued, addressing Lily; "you forget me; but I not forget your preddy face."

"I have not forgotten you," said Lily; "you were very kind to me."

"Vat," cried Franz, "you remember de joggolate, eh?"

"What do you know about the young lady, Stimmi?" the invalid asked.

"Mein generale," said the courier, "I know dat she is ver preddy cal; but Monsieur Constant knows all about her fadder and her modder, de and-ome dame you know, dat loog like de diger in de steam-boat."

"Then, let Monsieur Constant attend me," said the invalid.

Monsieur Constant was not far off, and Stimmi returned with him instantly. Monsieur Constant explained all to the invalid in a few words. Lily was the daughter of Francis Blunt.

"And I," said the invalid, raising himself and holding out his hands to Lily, "I am George Blunt, your father's brother, and your uncle. Let me be your uncle and your father's sake; you are the very image of her."

And so Lily was adopted by the rich old nabob of Cutchapore, a widower without child or child of his own to leave his millions to.

CHAPTER LIX. THE BROKEN IDOL.

LILY was now no longer Quite Alone. Her uncle idolised her, and was never tired of smoothing her beautiful brown hair and gazing with childish rapture at her lovely blue eyes.

George Blunt had not brought much liver home with him from India, but he had managed to preserve his heart. The former organ he had exercised overmuch, the latter not at all. In the pursuit of money-getting he had put his heart aside altogether, preserved it, as it were, in spirits of wine in a sealed bottle. And now,

when he had done with rupee grubbing, he opened the bottle and found his heart in a fine state of preservation.

He was quite foolish in his demonstrations of affection towards his pretty niece. He could not bear her to be out of his sight for a moment. He fondled and patted her as a child plays with a doll; he said inconceivably silly things to her in praise of her good looks, such childish nonsensical things that Lily quite blushed for him. If she had been a doll he would certainly never have rested until he had taken out and examined those lovely blue eyes which he was always looking at with so much wonder and delight.

Constant was jealous of the old man. So was Franz Stimmi. Constant almost repented of having brought Lily and her uncle together. The good-hearted courier went about regretting that the "preddy liddle cal" had outgrown her taste for joggolate. He took courage one day, and respectfully suggested joggolate. Lily took some which the courier offered her, and thanked him with many smiles, putting the sweetmeat in her pocket. Franz was quite hurt because she did not eat it there and then.

"Ah," he muttered to himself, "she is too big leddi now for joggolate; she is afraid of her stonjacks; but the liddle cal is nevare afraid of her stonjacks; oh no."

George Blunt had heard the history of his brother Frank's career from Constant, and reproached himself bitterly for not having been at hand to help him in his distress and misery. He now heard from Lily the history of her sad life, and the pitiful story moved him to tears. She told him all, not even omitting the cause of her flight from Madame de Kergolay's—her passion for Edgar Grynfaunt.

"He is not worthy of you, my dear, can't be worthy of you," he said, "to treat you as he has done. But you shall be as good as he, or any of them; the blood of the Blunts runs in your veins; and the money of George Blunt shall chink in your pocket, and I'll warrant you'll have a score of fellows at your feet in no time."

The Indian nabob, vain of his ancient lineage, and no less proud of his wealth, was deeply hurt at the idea of his brother's child being slighted and looked down upon; and he resolved that Lily should not only vindicate her position, but also glorify the family name. He had nothing to show in his own person (for he was a mere bag of bones) for the immense riches which he had acquired in India. His poor mummy of a body, wrapped in the richest robes, and decked with the finest gems, was but an object of pity.

Lily rose upon the old man's vision like a star in the dark. He found a beautiful idol upon which to hang his gold and his pearls—one who would wear them worthily, and command homage to his wealth. He loaded her with presents, dressed her in the richest robes, decked her with the rarest gems, engaged for her the handsomest suite of apartments in the hotel, bought her a brougham and a saddle-horse, and appointed a maid and a groom specially to attend upon her. The poor, friendless, lonely girl, so

recently discharging the humble duties of a horse-rider's dresser in the gardens of Ranelagh, was now a princess.

But the jewels and the fine dresses did not make Lily happy. In the midst of the splendour in which she lived, she was thinking with an aching heart of Edgar. His sudden disappearance on the night of her mother's death, and the return of his cheque, filled her with a vague fear that something had happened to him. She shrank from making inquiries about him; partly from a feeling of modesty, partly because she was unwilling that any one should think she doubted him. She resolved to say nothing on the subject, for a time at least; hoping that he would soon call to see her, or that she might meet him in the Park during her rides and drives. She went into the Park daily, either in her brougham, or on horseback. She had taken lessons at a riding-school, and became in a very short space of time an accomplished horse-woman. She had learned fast; for love was her teacher. She had learned to ride, that she might dispense with the attendance of a coachman and footman, and go out in the Park on horseback "Quite Alone." Her uncle humoured her in everything. If she had desired to ride in the Park on an elephant, he would have sent emissaries into Africa to procure her the finest specimen that could be found.

Weeks passed away, and Edgar had not called at the hotel; nor had Lily succeeded in meeting him in the Park. Her uncle and Constant both observed that, spite of her daily exercise in the fresh air, she was becoming pale, and thin, and careworn. Constant was aware of Lily's passion for Edgar, and feeling assured that her malady was love-sickness, he begged to be admitted to her confidence. After some hesitation she told him the state of the case frankly. She had been looking for Edgar day after day, and week after week, but in vain. She was afraid that he was ill, or that some misfortune had befallen him. Constant undertook to make inquiries. He did so; and found that the magnificent Mr. Greyfaunt had been arrested for debt, and was locked up in a spunging-house in Cursitor-street.

The young scapegrace had set up for a man of fashion upon the little fortune left him by his grand-aunt, Madame de Kergolay. It amounted to five thousand pounds, neither more nor less, and Edgar had spent the principal instead of the interest, living for the time at the rate of three thousand a year.

Constant did not at once inform Lily of the discovery he had made. He was anxious to find out what sort of person Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt was. He had no particular doubts about him before; but now, when he heard of him as the inhabitant of a spunging-house, he began at once to suspect that Edgar was a very bad young fellow. As a prosperous junkkeeper, Monsieur Constant regarded impunctuality in a gentleman of Mr. Greyfaunt's position as the worst of crimes.

Constant employed Franz Stimm as his mis-

sary and agent. Stimm visited the spunging-house, and saw Edgar, saying that he came from an unknown friend who was anxious to serve him. A few weeks behind prison bars had worked a great change upon the dandy—the usual change. The loss of liberty had degraded him, as it degrades nearly all men, however proud their spirit, however high their moral tone. In a few weeks the elegant exquisite had been transformed into a shabby, slouching, jail-bird. He had taken to slippers and wide-awake hats, to spirits-and-water and clay pipes. He shuffled about in a paved yard behind the bars, and associated without scruple with all comers. Debt is a great leveller—as great a leveller almost as death. In a spunging-house or a prison it brings all ranks together, and links them in the bond of a common brotherhood. The most noble person in a debtors' prison is he who owes most money. But the pettiest shopkeeper is on a footing with a lord in one respect—he is a debtor. The influence of debt and duress manifests itself in both alike—it conduces to down-at-heel shoes, carelessness as to clean linen, the growth of the beard, the smoking of common kinds of tobacco, and the consumption of vulgar drinks. Even if the lord have money, he finds, after a short residence in a debtors' prison, that he is acquiring a taste for the grosser kinds of luxuries. He begins to prefer slug tobacco to cigars, and to have an inordinate craving for beer.

Edgar very soon succumbed to the genius of that dingy house in Cursitor-street. Franz Stimm wondered what the preddy leddle leddi could see in such a shabby-looking fellow. Franz was armed with very careful instructions. He informed Greyfaunt of Lily's accession to fortune. She had found her uncle, a rich Indian nabob (he did not mention his name), who had adopted her, and designed to leave her the whole of his vast wealth.

Edgar caught at the news eagerly, and his eyes sparkled with expectancy. "What a fool! what an ass I have been!" he muttered to himself. He questioned Stimm as to the motives of the unknown friend who had sent him the news. Stimm explained that the unknown friend, who was aware of the position in which Mr. Greyfaunt stood towards Miss Lily, had an eye to business.

"Ah, I perceive," said Edgar; "he is a money-lender, and you are his agent."

Franz admitted that that might be the case.

"Well, look here," said Edgar; "if you will lend me the money and get me out of this cursed place, you shall have a hundred per cent for your master, and fifty per cent for yourself. It is only a miserable sum of two hundred pounds."

"But de security?" said Stimm.

"I have no security to offer you but my own note of hand," said Greyfaunt, "and you know what my expectations are. The girl is madly in love with me, and I have only to make her an offer to secure the prize. She will throw herself into my arms, fortune and all."

"Vil you gif me a letter to dat effeck dat I show mein master?" said Stimm.

"Certainly," said Greyfaunt. "Who is your master? Let me know the name of my disinterested friend?"

"His name is Constant," said the courier.

"What! Constant, who keeps Pomeroy's Hotel?"

"De same," said Franz.

"Ah," said Greyfaunt, gaily, "they are sharp fellows, those hotel-keepers. Constant has, no doubt, got wind of the girl's attachment to me, and wants to do a stroke of business over the affair. Very good, Monsieur Constant, I am obliged to you."

And the heartless puppy, who would not have hesitated to buy Lily first and sell her afterwards, sat down and wrote a letter to the hotel-keeper. It ran thus:

"Sir,—If you are willing to lend me two hundred pounds, I will give you my note of hand for five hundred, or a larger sum if you require it. I understand that you are fully aware of the freak of fortune which has transformed the daughter of a circus-woman into a sort of Indian princess. I believe, too, you are not ignorant of the fact that she is devoted to me, and that I have only to hold up my finger to make her mine. Nothing stands between me and the golden prize but the bolts and bars of this infernal cage. You may ascertain this for yourself, only use discretion. If you serve me in this, you shall have no reason to complain of your share of the plunder.

"Yours, &c.,

"EDGAR GREYFAUNT.

"To J. B. Constant, Esquire."

"There," said Greyfaunt, "take your master that, and let me have an answer at once. Delays are dangerous in these cases."

Stimm took the letter to his master, and Jean Baptiste Constant opened and read it. He had already been warned with respect to Greyfaunt's character, but he was not prepared for such heartlessness, such sordid baseness as this letter disclosed.

"The scoundrel!" he muttered through his teeth. "It is lucky for him I did not go, Stimm. I should have murdered him. And it is for such a wretch as this that poor Lily is sighing her life away! She cannot know how base he is, but she shall know; she shall not remain ignorant of his character for another hour."

Constant's first impulse was to show Lily the letter at once, but on reflection he decided to proceed more cautiously, and to break the news by degrees. He told her, first, that he had succeeded in discovering Greyfaunt.

Lily's eager look of pleasure pained him, and filled his breast with anger. He could scarcely restrain himself. To the torrent of anxious inquiries which she poured upon him, he replied coldly, without any further attempt to soften the information which he had to convey.

"Edgar Greyfaunt," he said, "is a heartless adventurer. Read that letter."

Lily read the letter, read it again and again without lifting her eyes, and at length her head sank upon her bosom, and the letter fell from her hands upon the floor. The idol her yearning heart had set up for itself in the days of her solitude lay crushed and broken at her feet.

NUMBER SEVEN, BROWN'S-LANE.

THE physician who has been reporting lately to the Privy Council upon the condition of the London needlewomen, found that day-workers in large millinery establishments earn nine shillings a week, or a little more, of which half-a-crown, or three shillings, is paid by each for the room she calls her own, and the rest has to find dress and food. They get only their tea at the place of business. At nine, ten, or eleven, on a winter's night they go home to their cold garrets, light a fire, if they can afford fuel, and cook the scanty supper that is the only real meal of the day; or, if they cannot light a fire, go to bed cold, supperless perhaps, and often thinly clad. There is one house thoughtful enough to keep a servant who cooks for these poor girls at mid-day the little dinner they may bring; their chops and sausages, potatoes, or batter in gallipots. Many, says their cook, bring meat only now and then; some never, but eat instead of it bread-and-butter, or bread and pickles. A pennyworth of bread and a pennyworth of pickles is a common dinner of the poorer needlewomen. The pieces of meat when brought are often so small as hardly to be worth cooking, often coarse little scraps, and even tainted. This represents, be it understood, the condition of the middle class of needlewomen, in the prime of life. What becomes of them when they are old? As a common rule, with, of course, many exceptions, a dressmaker as old as thirty-five can hardly get employment in a fashionable house, for she is prematurely aged, her fingers have lost suppleness, her jaded mind has lost the interest in dress that keeps up what is called taste among women. What becomes, then, of the old dressmakers? Mrs. Chevalier, the manager of a Home in Great Ormond-street, explains their case in this way: "Taking any moderately good worker it is found that she continues stationary only for a few years. Some rise in their calling, becoming in succession second and first hands, and at last, having saved money, go into business on their own account; others marry and leave their occupation; others, after mastering dressmaking and millinery, take service as ladies' maids; and lastly, too many go down in the scale, are found not to be good enough for their employment, and degenerating into poor needlewomen, drift away eastward."

When we hear of distress in London that has drifted away eastward, we simply feel that it has been added as one drop more to a heavy cup of bitterness. For many a mind the West and

the East Ends of London might be represented each by its cup, sweet wine in the one, and in the other wine from the "grapes of gall, whose clusters are bitter." But the East, even where want is hungriest, is no more wretched for its poverty than is the West all happy for its wealth. It is not only that many there who have no treasures of earth to care for, concentrate all man's natural desire for wealth upon the treasures of a future world, and find the way to spiritual life more easily for being led by one who prayed to his Father as they too have prayed, "If it be thy will let this cup pass from me, yet not my will but thine be done." In the actual life of the very poor there is a closer contact with the weighty truths that have sunk through the light waters above and lie at the bottom of life's well. For these sufferers too lie at the bottom of the well. They have not generally the broken image of sympathy that shines up through the surface waters of the fashionable world; the wise and practical benevolence which forms the subject of this article excepted. The chief sympathy they get lies most amongst themselves. It lies close and touches them. Acts of free service and ungrudging, unobtrusive aid, visibly interchanged one to another, represent in their common intercourse the only form that sympathy can take where the claim is obvious and incessant upon mutual help and forbearance. They want nobody to teach them any theory of society by which its problems shall be solved. They see the naked principles of life at wrestle with each other. For them Greed never wears a mask, or softens his harsh voice, or bows with a mock-pliant affability, and hides his claws under his coat-cuffs, as he does when he makes calls at the West End. For them Pride does not ape humility; for them Anger disdains to keep within the fence of covert irony and satire, but rages coarse and cruel with a fury unrestrained; Hate, when he comes among them, beats, kicks, stabs, and throttles. It is sometimes said that the distressed poor, from want of refinement, do not feel as we fine folk should feel under like circumstances. Perhaps not. The first sensation of many of our highly refined selves, if reduced fairly to like close acquaintance with the undisguised forces and passions of life, would be as of the application of stiff besom to the social cobwebs spun over our eyes.

Down in the East of London, and wherever else in a Christian land the struggle of life is reduced to its elements, the conflicting forces battle about every poor man's way as distinctly as John Bunyan ever saw them. Terribly real there is the den in Doubting Castle where the prisoners of Giant Despair might lie "from Wednesday morning till Saturday night, without one bit of bread, or drop of drink, or light, or any to ask how they did." They feel in all their flesh the beating they get from the giant's crab-tree cudgel, and hear him ask, "Why should you choose life, seeing it is attended with so much bitterness?" But for these bruised souls also there is an escape to the Delectable

Mountains, and they are as men walking with angels when the shepherds of those mountains, Knowledge, Experience, Watchful and Sincere, give them welcome and look lovingly upon them as they ask, "Is there in this place any relief for pilgrims that are weary and faint by the way?" And to their asking answer, "The Lord of these Mountains hath given us a charge not to be forgetful to entertain strangers; therefore the good of the place is before you." We may go down to that east end of our little world of London—to Spitalfields or Bethnal-green—whither poverty drifts, and see there, when we come to know some of its inmates, men and women walking on the Delectable Mountains, beholding its gardens and orchards, its vineyards and fountains of water. We may find there also tents of the shepherds of the mountains. Such a tent may look like a little house in a poor street—there is one at Number Seven, Brown's-lane, Spitalfields; but by the suffering poor, who therein find those very shepherds, Knowledge, Experience, Watchful and Sincere, their ever ready aids and comforters, the living truth of life is seen here also through its shell. If they in their hard struggle hear, as it were, the hideous roaring of a visible Apollyon, they see also the Shining Ones as they walk commonly among them in the land that is upon the borders of heaven, and even from Number Seven, Brown's-lane, can see the not distant radiance of the city of Immanuel. To the educated mind, with a large element of speculation in its thoughts of life and of religion, it is wonderful to note how closely the spiritual allegory of the tinker's son is fitted to the real mind of our suffering and tempted poor. There is a sacred superstition in the actual images by which all spiritual things are represented to the mind as half material realities.

Let us visit now those shepherds of the mountain in the tent known at Spitalfields as Number Seven, Brown's-lane. It is the only house in the lane with steps to its door, a house into which they who go, go up. As a public institution it has a very modest name, for it is called simply "Miss Burdett Coutts's Sewing School." It is a great deal more than it calls itself. If we had not called it the tent of the four shepherds, we might liken it to one of the fresh fountains upon the Delectable Mountains, at which pilgrims recovered strength upon their onward way; a fountain that began to bubble up three years ago, and pours now a rich stream of health over a thirsty soil. But we abide by our faith in it as the tent of the four shepherds whom Miss Coutts takes into her pay to carry out her sagacious, well-considered plan.

Connected with the Brown's-lane Sewing School is a complete system of carefully-devised help for the poor of eight districts or more in Bethnal-green and Spitalfields. There are no rigidly defined boundaries of action; the simple desire is to reach with a kind word and a helping hand all the distress lying round about.

Eight district clergymen take more or less part in the finding of fit persons to help, and the bringing of fit help to them, but the clergy have no sort of control over the charity, which is free as the gentle rain to freshen where it falls. The Sewing School is for the help of in-door and of out-door workers. It is not a school for the training of young girls to the bad business of needlewomen; on the contrary, it very carefully avoids doing that.

In-doors its school-girls are old girls who have, many of them, grandchildren, and who are recommended by want and a good character to the opportunity of here spending a profitable afternoon, from half-past one till five o'clock, in earning what they can. They get in winter a good meal of soup and bread before they begin work, and in summer stay for tea and bread and butter, and have a lump of bread to carry home after their work is done. They need not be good or bad needlewomen when they come for such help; they are taught, if necessary, by their good shepherds Watchful and Sincere (the manager's wife and sister) how to earn something every week for their own sustenance in aid of the poor family at home. Married women, too, may come and learn how to stitch well if they do not already know. The school does not open till half-past one, so that they cannot come till they have done their morning duties in the house, and seen to the dinner of their husbands and children. That done, they may come into the tent of the good shepherds, and by a few hours' needlework help to pay for the scanty comforts of those whom they cherish. They are paid according to the quantity of work they do, but when they are infirm with age and dim of sight, they are paid by the hour. What it is meant to give is help, and while great care is taken that no sort of help shall be a substitute for proper industry and individual exertion, no wall of formal rule is suffered to part a true need from the touch of sympathy.

Out of doors the Sewing School gives work to be done by poor women who bring from some respectable person written security for work entrusted to them. Having shown by stitching a sample in the sewing-room that they can work well enough to content the government inspectors of shirts, whom Brown's-lane has to satisfy, they are allowed to take out six or twelve shirts at a time, are paid for them by ones or twos, or as they will, whenever they bring them back, and when alterations are found necessary are not sent empty away, but are allowed to sit down in the sewing-room and make their work right on the spot. Needles are sold to them at wholesale prices; cottons and other requisites are given to them free. The work given is only shirt-making, and no other than that furnished by part of the government contract for making the shirts of our soldiers and sailors. There are regulation quality of material, and a regulation make, so strictly preserved, that a shirt will be rejected for a broken thread in its calico, or for a quarter of an inch too much or too little of gathers in the making, or for a drop of oil from

the sewing-machine on any part of it. The price paid at Number Seven, Brown's-lane, for the hand-stitching of such a shirt is fivepence-halfpenny, but that is not for the whole making. It is already more than the ghost of a shirt before it comes into the hands of the needlewoman, every part being ready cut and prepared, and its main parts already put together by the sewing-machine. Thus, at fivepence-halfpenny for the making of each shirt so fully prepared, there is one industrious woman of forty, with a sickly husband and two daughters, one of whom helps her a little, who can make half a dozen shirts a day, and is now generally earning fifteen shillings a week. She began at the Sewing School as a slow worker, and now makes the highest rate of earnings. The average is seven or eight shillings; but this is very commonly money earned in the intervals of household duty, that makes in a poor home the difference between hard want and a sufficient living. About five hundred women are in the course of a year helped in this way at Number Seven, Brown's-lane, the number of workers thus employed at one time being about sixty in-doors and two hundred out of doors.

On the first floor we find some of the sixty busy on wristbands, and other mysteries too deep for the masculine intellect. Here is a grandmother, ever garrulous of her soldier son, whose life was miraculously saved in some battle of a yet further East than this. She has a picture of the battle, and an ever-welling memory of the great mercy that spared to her her boy. And so, among the fellow-strugglers with herself in their own battle of the east, she talks of a far war, all forgetting that which is near to them, that in which they have themselves struggled and been trampled down, and raised again, and carried for the healing of their wounds into the cool and pleasant tent of the good shepherds. "It is so pleasant to come here," says a worker dim of eye, "for all the while we are here we never hear a sound of anger." Ah, the relief from the chiding in the dark dens of that giant Despair, from whom they are rescued! The grating cry of the impatient sufferer, the shriek of the child struck by the hungry mother, who has been for a vain solace to the gin-shop, the bared passions, the naked vice that brawls and curses in the street before the window of the quietest in those chill homes, the never silent roaring of Apollyon! One who knew nothing of the life thus comforted, might not have guessed how prominent a charm would be the mere peace and quiet of the tent on the Delectable Mountain.

Quiet! Well, that exists only metaphorically on the top floor, where are the sewing-machines, one of them Thomas's, and if that particular machine cannot thrash wheat as well as stitch, it ought to do so, for the noise, as of a great thrashing, that it makes. The sewing-machine is establishing itself as a benefactor at the East End of the town. It is a benefactor, first, because a young woman at a sewing-machine can earn almost twice as much as she can with a needle; secondly, because there is an amount of general

bodily exercise at this work, which makes the women employed at sewing-machines healthier than those who live by their needle; and thirdly, because, although it gets through the work of many persons while only employing one, it can, as we see at Number Seven, Brown's-lane, be so used in the preparation of handwork as to improve very sensibly the earnings of hand-workers who labour in subordination to it. Its tendency is thus to revive, with new and wholesome sap, a sickly, overgrown, and almost poisonous calling. One of the sewing-machines at Brown's-lane prepares in a day five dozen shirts for the makers; but what one person with machine help thus prepares, it takes eighteen or twenty to make up. Even where there are middlemen to profit by the labour of the poor, the sewing-machine has bettered the old wages of slopwork, upon which there are still women wearing themselves in the old way by endless hours of ill-paid labour, hungry and sleepless, to the grave. Number Seven, Brown's-lane, does not, on the other hand, compete with the fair trader in any way. It is managed like any other workshop, and is made to yield a profit, even on the minimum prices paid by government, whose work it only undertakes.

On this top floor, in a room next to that wherein the sewing-machines work, the cutting out is done, under particular superintendence of the shepherds or shepherdesses Watchful and Sincere. It is a matter of no small consequence to have the right way of exact and simultaneous cutting of the divers round, and square, and otherwise complex pieces, that when put together make a shirt. It was said that it could be done only on any considerable scale for the saving of time with a costly piece of machinery. But, like a thousand problems of society said to be solvable only by help of the most ingenious apparatus of wheels within wheels, the thing to be done and the easiest way of doing it had only to be clearly seen and heartily gone into, to be achieved by the most unpretending of all agencies. For when Sincere gave her mind even to the cutting out question, she very soon found that the thing required could be done perfectly with no more complex machinery than a long knife and a slit or two in an old kitchen table. That is pretty much the general experience of life. Sincere is the great simplifier.

Now, if it be nearly five o'clock, and we come down stairs from the top to the bottom, we shall find at the foundation of the house a kitchen, that, before Number Seven was taken for its present purpose, had been used as a great dust-hole, and was full of rottenness, that sent a steam of death up through the house. It was a typical change that transformed this den of corruption into the well-swept kitchen, with its genial fire alight, a mighty can of tea brewing upon the hearth, and sending up a steam of health, sixty mugs on the table waiting to be filled, and on a side-table bread in abundance to be eaten, and also to be carried out for help to the sustenance of other homes. We taste of

the good brew an' go up again into the little office by the entrance door.

Two women are there, each with a bit of paper in her hand. They are district nurses, paid chiefly by the Institution for Nursing Sisters in Devonshire-square, and partly by the clergy in whose parishes they visit. The papers in their hands are lists, each with about a score of names of sufferers, the fever smitten, the palsied, the bedridden; the women who lie with young infants freshly born into a home of want. They bring their daily lists into the tent of the good shepherds, to whose charge also is given that they entertain the sick and suffering among the poor with meat and wine. A ticket for a shilling's-worth of meat may look like a commonplace document; but in the haunts of poverty the most illegible and complex physician's prescription, bristling with cabalistic signs and abbreviated pestle-Latin, sinks low in comparison with this:

Recipe,—

Rumpsteak, one pound.

Cook.

To be eaten directly.

As for the wine, here it is in cask as imported; a strong and sweet white wine, and a pure Bordeaux, topped by a cask of good brandy. The poor also owe thanks to Mr. Gladstone for the cheap and wholesome varieties of pure light wine that he has enabled them to bring to the sick-bed in place of the old doctored port and sherry that were only one degree less noxious than the most part of the apothecary's physic. We hope to see the system of administering relief through the agency of out-door nurses paid out of the parish rates, widely adopted.

If we could have three wishes for the poorest people of the East, the wishes might well be for Meat and Wine and Whitewash. And even for the whitewash there is thought taken at Number Seven, Brown's-lane. In times when work is hard to get, the unemployed and partially employed men of the surrounding district are there provided with the means of keeping their home standing till the better day arrives. Only under exceptional conditions is a whole day's work given to any able-bodied man. Were that done there would be interference with the natural and healthy stimulus to seek work in the ordinary way. But if a poor man cannot get a day's work, he may do half a day's work for Number Seven, from half-past one to eight o'clock, and be sure of a shilling if a single man, or eighteenpence if married; in this, as in every case, the condition of help being that the applicant is "needy and deserving." If no other work can be found him, he is sent to carry the free ministrations of the whitewash pail to homes that need and will accept them, is set to paper rooms, repair the broken table, mend the window through which the wind whistles contempt of want, make a roof weather-tight, or help keep in repair the churches of the district. Small orders for work are also given to men partially employed: the rug-weaver is set to work upon a hearth-rug, the starving shoemaker is set to

make boots, perhaps for the servants and sailor-boys who also come to Number Seven, Brown's-lane, for their outfit. For when a poor girl, recommended by a clergyman as "deserving and needy," has obtained her first place as a servant, she may have given to her at Brown's-lane an outfit of dresses and under-clothing, shawl and bonnet, stockings, boots, bedgowns, aprons, and caps, that enables her to present herself in a fit manner to her employers. The clothes thus given are made in that same tent on the Delectable Mountain, and three hundred such outfits have been given within the last two or three years. With a like liberality poor and deserving boys receive gifts of the outfit necessary for their proper entrance into the Merchant Service. For the Royal Navy, few lads in this poverty-stricken district are tall enough or stout enough.

Then there are within the tent stores of "maternity boxes" for the lending of all needful things to distressed women about to become mothers; and five hundred blankets under which every winter their bodies lie warm. They are lent when winter is setting in, and are returned clean some time in May.

If we go from the house to the little homes of the poor whom it comforts, we may the more clearly see the worth of its work. Here are some cases from the experience of one of the district clergy: A man, eighty-five years old, has been married for more than half a century to the wife who, now that the grown-up children have left the nest, is his only companion. They want food, and even clothing; they have sold their bed to pay their rent, and they owe rent. Brown's-lane knows that they have done their share of labour in this world, and are entitled now to sympathy and solace, and Brown's-lane gave them all last winter what was necessary to their health and comfort. Old people in seasons of distress are thus saved from the workhouse, the scraps of furniture, of which the oldest may have in their little household the most sacred memories—the sampler worked by the girl who is their child-daughter in heaven, the little chair in which she sat, the patchwork quilt that granny made when she was young, and grandfather was courting her—these things are saved to them, and their own lives also are sustained. The mortality among the aged in the one parish, of which records are before us, was last winter lessened so considerably, that only two of the number died. A whole family was fever-stricken; the father and two children were taken to the workhouse, the mother and two children were left in the poor and dirty home. From Number Seven, Brown's-lane, meat, and wine, and whitewash came; the father returned convalescent. Meat and wine were still supplied; every life was saved, and the family is now well, and earning without help its own scanty living. A poor weaver, with a wife and five children, failed in eyesight; meat and wine gave him his sight again, and to the help given while he was unable to work was added the finding for him of work more suited to his physical condition. He has now begun the

world afresh, and prospers. Here, again, says the record, sustained help is brought to an aged couple, whose united earnings are five shillings a week. The old man has been run over, and is deaf. Here, again, help is given to a widowed grandmother, who lives with a widowed daughter, both trying in vain to get bread, shelter, and clothing, as washerwomen. Here it is help to a poor old widow, who is dependent on a sickly son. And here, again, the help is to a wife with a bad husband, who has left her and her family to starve, or to a wife and children where the bread-winner is lately dead, or lamed by an accident. A man who could find no work was set to the repair of bedsteads, and other necessary articles that he found broken and useless, and in this way were restored comfort and tidiness to the homes of twenty families, at a total cost of two pounds twelve and seven-pence-halfpenny for labour and material.

If we leave the tent of the four shepherds, and, still on the Delectable Mountain, travel homeward by way of Columbia-square, built by Miss Countts to provide cheap, wholesome, and comfortable homes for two hundred families,* we may glance also at the market which the same lady is causing to rise by its side, for bringing into the district—with which she has no tie but that of human sympathy—plenty of good food at the fairest market prices. We might turn aside, also, to look at the Ragged School that stands near by to feed the starved minds of the children. But it is more than an afternoon's work to see all that a wise head and munificent hand, prompted by a warm and sympathising heart, has been for months and years maturing for the wretchedest end of London.

Let Number Seven, Brown's-lane, be recognised—now that winter, always hard and biting to the poor, approaches—as an example of what one head can effect for a whole district. Once established, the working details are not difficult to carry out, nor more expensive (being partly self-supporting) than lie within the scope of much less affluence than the means with which Miss Countts is blessed—and blesses. The example of that lady, who originates this practical mode of uniting charity with profitable work, is always a safe one to follow in good deeds of a like kind.

A BOARD OF GREEN CLOTH.

CHAPTER I. OUR HOTEL.

CHARLES LAMB gossips in his delightful and fanciful way upon the names of Books, showing how certain authors' names seem to bring up with them a sort of fragrance, or even music. He instances Kit, Marlowe, Drummond of Hawthornden, and some more. Had the same vein pursued him, had he loved Fleet-street less and travelling more, and ever have found himself as I find myself now, under the white curtains of a very white window in a very white room, looking on the cheerful gardens of our Wies-

* See vol. vii., page 301.

baden hotel, he would surely have fallen into a speculation on the names of hotels—how they fit their character, and have a fragrance of their own, and we should, perhaps, have had one delightful paper the more in Elia.

The name of our house is The Rose, or Rosenhaus, or, prettier still, Hôtel de la Rose. Elia, seeing it in his Bradshaw, would have driven straight to it. A charming little settlement. You like saying the word over many times in the day, as if you were ringing a little silver handbell. "I am at the Rose," "Just come from the Rose," "Going to dine at the Rose," with more to the like song. Yet we drive through zig-zag streets, that twist like forked lightning, that are no longer than some dozen yards, where great houses are set down capriciously—now with corners forward, now sides, now fronts, now backs, like the little toy towns of delightful memory, bought for us when children—consisting of a dozen solid little houses, which we could set up just as we pleased, building a new town every day with inexhaustible variety. Emerging from one of these little lanes, we drive up right into our settlement of The Rose.

Our settlement—that is, our Rose—consists of many houses, as it were, of many leaves: part of it is over the way, part to the right, part to the left. All these rosebuds, however, are grouped about a delightful and most inviting garden, with bowers, and arbours, and alcoves, where the guests, filled with good things, are fond of wandering. At breakfast and dinner times, when the bell rings out, you see the company trooping from the scattered houses—from these out-settlements—across the garden.

Our Rose is bright cream colour, and every window has its cream-coloured eyelids, or "jalousies," which sometimes flap noisily all together. Yet it does not glare; for as you look up, it seems to lie at the foot of a green bank just overhead, which is well furnished with more yellow houses: all as bright and festive looking as can be conceived. Just over our garden we can see a walk covered in with light iron-work, the light work hidden away by vines and creepers, and people pass and repass on this, pausing now and then to look down into our garden; while we who are smoking languidly, like Moslems, with our ladies busy with work, look up in our turn and see gentlemen in grey hats with broad black bands, and moustaches—that look as if swelled and inflamed, they stick out so bluntly and palsy—and who carry little red goblets out before them, as if wishing some one else to drink it for them. Pass, too, ladies in broad straw hats, also hospitably obtruding their tumblers. In short, we see a patch of the moving procession of drinkers, who are now on their "beat," and trying to cool their liquor, which the young lady of the fountain has drawn for them raging hot.

I like everything about our Rose, it is so white and clean, so spacious, with such a fine dining-hall, like a convent refectory, with a gallery at the top for musicians to play in.

There we dine a hundred and fifty strong. There shaven boy-waiters, always gay and free with you, yet not disrespectful, seud to and fro, and proffer the welcome dish. There Bullington—very hearty, and fresh as a sea captain—talks loudly to the attendants in his native tongue and is understood by them, and says to his brother that they are really getting civilised in these places. There our host, who must have as much on his mind as a cabinet minister, hovers about at all hours with a calm melancholy on his face, which has all the shaven blueness of one of the Spanish mucheros in Mr. Philip's pictures. He is a gentleman; but his life is one long dinner. Dinner in some stage prevails the whole day long, and the guests rush to the assault at one, and at five. There are Britons among us whose whole soul is in this meal, and who, from noon, are restlessly looking at their watches, fearful of being surprised. I like, too, our breakfasts—in their simplest character: the freshest and coolest of butter, the best of milk, and the delicious "close" white little rolls, all of which in many a morning walk I have seen; the cleanest and most comfortable of peasants carrying in to the town from neighbouring market gardens. And I like our little eccentric brass-kettles in the shape of diving-bells, with brass stands for spirit-lamps, which are quaint to look at. Our host, too, has pleasant ways about him, which makes him welcome, and us sorry to leave him. Of a Monday, perhaps, our hall is filled with huge trunks coming down, and a great omnibus standing at the gate is being loaded. Many guests are standing to see other guests off, and very often a pleasant little party is broken up and scattered. Then is our host seen flitting about; and he has a pretty little custom of his own which makes those who go think hereafter of the Rose with pleasure. Every departing lady finds on her table a charming bouquet made artistically, in a pretty little silver-looking holder. These little courtesies take off the rude surfaces of bill-paying, and remove the commercial sense of the intimacy. And thus, hereafter, we think very pleasantly of Herr Alten, and his "Rose Hotel," and his "Garten Haus," and gardens and bowers where we had our after-dinner council, and where in the morning the ladies sat and worked.

CHAPTER II. OUR GAMING-HOUSE.

THE pattern of this house of entertainment, where the "game is made," is different from that of other houses. By the law of gaming, two parasites seem always to flourish under its shelter, to be almost necessary, and absolutely to adhere to its sides. These are: first, the "Restoration"—the dinners, suppers, ices, coffees, sorbets, and cognacs, with which a gambling settlement must be supplied, just as a regular city must be with wholesome water; and, secondly, the long ranges of shops and bazaars for jewellery and knick-knacks, whose only claim to public support is that they shall be strictly useless. Here we are sure to find the Frankfort garnets and crystals, the rude brown

Tyrolese carvings, served by the theatrical Tyrolese man and his family, each about as brown and rude as their carvings; the sham young Turk, with his sham Turkish gewgaws made at Lyons, who sits "au sultan," as other sham Turks sit in Regent-street and in the Rue de Rivoli—the old pictures, as raw as if they were done in red clay; and tiny eye-glasses—the "pincenez"—without focus, and only to be used as a coquetish instrument. These are necessary for gambling life; for, as extravagance wins, so extravagance must spend.

The lessons learnt at home about "throwing away money" make the young traveller almost start, as he sees gold and silver tossed about here so recklessly across the Board of Green Cloth. The croupiers seem to him calm and superior beings, with all the finish of complete gentlemen, with a dash of courteous chivalry, instead of mere tradesmen and civil shopkeepers, which many of them are. The players are all Russian noblemen and gallant adventurers, with an air of interest hanging about them, instead of being, as they are, the "double extract" of vagabond rascality and cracked character.

Respectable middle class ladies taking their first glass of spa water on their first travels, become so dazzled and flattered by the cheap courtesies of those who sit next them, so elated with winning a wretched one-and-eightpence for a night or two in succession, that it is almost amusing to watch how they are led on into sitting down formally at the board, and grow into friendly familiarity with the scrubby foreign scamps about them. The simple husband looks on with pride as he notes how admirable are the friendly relations which foreign travel brings about, and how stiffly and stupidly we manage things at home. He, too, in his own department, has staked his dwindled one-and-eightpence, and in a fever of agitation has clutched his prize. He has shown the precious coin to his wife, who should share in all his triumphs. Their rest that night is very sweet, for they have been chuckling over the notion of paying all their expenses with their winnings.

In a few days, however, all is changed; the fatal "run" has come, all the mendicant silver—won with such pains and fluttering of the heart (enough to bring on confirmed palpitation)—has drifted away, with much more. There are anxious looks—sour looks—hostile looks—and even unpleasant altercation. One had warned the other, had clearly prophesied—do him *that* justice at least—that all this would come to pass. To which it is replied, what was the use of *that* sort of thing now; it was enough to have lost without being *worried*. There is no such test of the true quality of temper as a trifling reverse at this place, and we can fancy a scarlet Mephistopheles standing by with his head decorated with a cock's feather, chuckling.

To stand by and see the wreck of "a system" is one of the most dismal spectacles in the world. The most marvelous thing is that the ship goes to pieces in a few minutes. There is

a stout English gentleman, for instance, in a rich brown wig, and a flowing white waistcoat, who has discovered "a system," and has come to play it. We may suspect that he has been a good deal "knocked about," and has rubbed up against all manner of characters: for he talks in French and German with a fluency that more respectable people do not attain. He has his fixed place on the croupier's right; has a little volume on gaming, beautifully scored in red and black lines, and has, besides, a black crop-haired twinkling-eyed aide-de-camp, whose duty it is to do hurried arithmetic, and lay down the money. Before the chief is to be seen a most inviting and varied pile; two fat rouleaux, three heaps of golden double Fredericks, and three or four heaps of heavy double florins. Every morning he comes, and a gaming menial secures his place for him, according to the formula, by laying a bit of silver on a card, and there he sits from eleven until about two.

The system consists of beginning with a couple of florins. If he win, the same sum and a little more is put down on the other colour; if he lose, double is put down on the first colour. Generally he loses for, say three or four turns, but then all would come right again. The system flourished. People began to talk of the burly Englishman and his system; and it was known that he was winning steadily and surely about forty Napoleons a day. It was hard and severe work, but it was sure, and he was content with small gains.

Once or twice came what fast men pleasantly called "a squeak." Luck seemed to take pleasure in "dodging" him, and, as often as he changed his colour, it perversely changed too. Gradually his arithmetic grew complicated—the arithmetician aide-de-camp had to do large sums, and at last reached five hundred florins, which would be one thousand two hundred and forty or so the next time. It really *did* come to that, and the burly Englishman gasped a little as he staked. But the right colour came up, and he was saved.

It went on for a fortnight, when, one morning I came in just as he has got into one of these crises. It was eight hundred florins. It was two thousand. The aide-de-camp is agitated. The leader is white and red with agitation. He has to visit a private bank in his breast-pocket, and takes out rustling notes of a thousand francs. He loses again. More notes, more losses. He has to abandon the system in confusion. The whole thing is over in ten minutes. The ship goes to pieces—system, numbers, calculations, aide-de-camp, everything is swept under, and in a few seconds more is heard the fatal shriek of the foot of the chair violently pushed back upon the polished floor. The croupiers, who have had infinite trouble during the last fortnight announcing his calculations, grin and chuckle as he goes; but I see their superintendent stamp his foot angrily, and "gronder" them through his teeth! The decades must be kept up, and we must respect misfortune. The poor burly Englishman and his aide are seen

no more; but this is the old, old, the very *oldest* story.

CHAPTER III. OUR THEATRE.

IN the Gaming *Place* stands the theatre—a great yellow Parthenon-looking building standing by itself, like most theatres in Germany. We may walk round it. The performers have not to skulk down a squalid lane to get to their stage, or to enter by a mean door, nor is the building to which that door gives admittance a grim and dirty house, built for a jail, long before jails were made architectural. This is a bright flashing structure; perhaps not so bright inside as it is outside. It begins its entertainment like a good rational theatre at half-past six, and concludes it at nine. The prices are wonderful; the best places, and which are practically the worst, cost no more than three-and-sixpence, and you can have a numbered pit stall for about a shilling and twopence. Best place of all, however, is a class of seat unknown to us at home—a row of boxes under the regular boxes, and which are a little raised above the heads of those in the pit. These are known as “Parterre-loges,” and cost about one-and-sixpence. For this one-and-sixpence we have had many a pleasant evening, and listened to an inexhaustible variety of operas wonderfully done. If there was a weakness on the stage as to voices, the good orchestra carried all through. But in other points, chorus, scenery, and even ballet, every thing was excellent. For this is the state theatre, and our grand-duke (who is like a German professor, with his spectacles coming so oddly on the top of a uniform) takes a pride in having *his* opera and *his* ballet to show to a stray kinglet or dukelet coming that road. And the orchestra—very large and well crowded, and their music-books all glaring white from shaded lamps—has quite a Grand Opera look.

One night we had the delightful Faust—Faust the New; not poor old-fashioned Faust of Capelmeister Spohr, now for ever exploded. The orchestra played it with delight. Marguerita becoming here “Margot,” came to us as a “Fraulein Peckl”—a name with all the force of a *douche* as regards romance.

Yet “Fraulein Peckl,” although her hair was of the blackest, and the most abundant black, and although she married M. Gounod’s charming music to profuse “*nights*” and “*ishes*,” and although a little gaunt about the shoulders, did wonderfully well, sang with spirit and taste, though, perhaps, scarcely with Italian feeling. In the famous jewel song, so delicate and airy that the touch should be as light as the fluttering of insects (has it been noted with what exquisite effect the intractable accompaniment of cymbals has been introduced into this song?), she did her work with effect. So, too, with “Herr Callieri,” who played Faust with taste, although at times, when wrestling with some trying high note, he showed a distress that seemed to reach almost to agony. But for the

arch enemy not much can be said, for not much *could* be said for an arch enemy, heavy, lumbering, corpulent, and painfully thick about the throat. He made a grave and thoroughly German business of it, too, going through it conscientiously, and without a particle of the conventional jocularly, shrugs, faces, sneers, which we have been taught to associate with an arch enemy. The scenery—the cathedral and witches scene—ballet and choruses were charming and wonderful for that parterre-loge price.

The next night we looked on the *Baubière*; the next night at *Matilda*, a pleasant little opera by an obscure German composer; and on the next night we hurry to the battle-ground of Party, and hear *The Flying Dutchman*, a very remarkable work of Richard Wagner. To those who love music, and the politics of music, this is a more serious question than could be supposed. There can be no question that his principles, though not officially recognised, have exercised a great influence on the music of the last ten or twelve years. Three operas of Verdi, the *Traviata*, the *Ballo*, and his newest, *La Forza*, all exhibit strong Wagnerian traces. In Meyerbeer’s *Demoral* we find some also.

CHAPTER IV. OUR MUSIC AND DANCING.

AT times, when the rain is dripping down among the orange-trees and splashing on the lake, all the company drifts into the great ball-room, where the orchestra, perched in a gallery, are to play. Glass doors open out on M. Chevet’s restaurant, and the usual “main” of coffee and ice is turned on. Then comes that exhibition of human selfishness which is always to be reckoned on where the question of chairs arises. Scrape a Tartar, and Napoleon, in the well-frayed saying; but put a foreign lady among chairs while music is playing, and all the earthy part of her nature breaks out. There are not too many for one, for a book must have a chair as well as a human being, and feet must have *their* chair too. The great room becomes as a gipsy encampment; its spring velvet sofas are loaded with heavy bourgeois men and women, who perhaps cannot afford to sit so comfortably elsewhere; work is brought, a hundred circles are formed, and every one sets himself to be comfortable and happy. Outside, among the orange-trees, hundreds are walking up and down, and the two black swans live sumptuously for an hour or so. Should they ever be sent away to quieter and more innocent ponds, at the sound of music of any quality, they will be sure to hurry to the edge, and expect their banquet.

Wonderful life this for men and women—and the natural question is, who supports these thick-throated, shaven-checked men, whose whole life seems to have no wider circle than the little marble table on which their coffee-cup stands, and whose thoughts do not travel a longer journey than the end of their cigar? Who helps these gentry to eat the bread of idleness in such comfort? As for some of the ladies, they have an “industry” of their own.

How charming the music from the gallery, it helps by two rainy hours so pleasantly. All honour to Hungarian "Kéler Béla," chapel and bandmaster "des Herzogl. Nassauischen II., Infanterie-Regiments," who has transformed his noisy out-door band into a perfect orchestra. Kéler Béla does everything, arranges, beats time, snatches up a clarinet when there is danger, or flies at a violin, and fiddles desperately. All honour to these musicians of all work.

It is like "a breath of the sweet south" when one hears the opening notes of a Strauss valse. Is not this master—for he is a master—the Watteau of musicians? He is more like Meissonier, for the canvas on which he paints is very small. We all know the pattern of one of these charming compositions. Better and more acceptable without a formal introduction to embark at once on a soft, sweet, seductive, and half-melancholy air, which winds and flows in curves, without jerks or intervals, near the last finish of which comes a rich swell or protest from the full brass crowd, as who should say, "let us join, do," but who are told, "not yet."

Then repeated, to make us love it a little better and recollect it. Then crash of cymbals and drum, and the crowd, let in, have their own way and rage tumultuously, then disperse and give way again to our soft air, coming in by herself like a pensive white-robed maiden who has lost something, and seeks it mournfully. Then they crowd again, and all go off.

Of Saturday nights, the administration breaks out with hospitality into a ball. The gold and gilding and scarlet and pillars, behind which the company who do not dance sit in files, look brilliant in the light. The orchestra is above in the clouds. There is a perfect prairie of parquet floor, as free an expanse for the true dancer as a pond for the skater; and the former, on the encouragement of Strauss, winding out from above, flies down like an arrow. But there is a famine of gentlemen. A few Austrian officers—with the affection peculiar to that service—walk up and down arm-in-arm, talking as if they were crowding their last private instructions into the few seconds they had to spare before the sailing of the packet. The effect of the promenade would be better, as seen from the benches, if their white coats had been better made. A back view is like one vast wrinkle. But they were, so to speak, out of work; and, as far as dancing went, required a relief fund and a central committee. A little master of ceremonies—very like the Emperor Napoleon in the Punch caricatures—who carries a cocked-hat, and to whom nobody pays the least attention, is quite helpless. In the early part of the evening, he and his cocked-hat are more

considered, for his hands are full of prettily-printed programmes, with a paper tube behind holding a pencil—articles which every one is eager to secure. For the time, therefore, he is in a sort of spurious request, and is sought with importunity, until the selfish wants of the community being all supplied, he sinks of a sudden into mortifying neglect.

Our dances are in sets. Thus we have our cards set out in this wise.

1. Valse.
1. Française (quadrille).
1. Polka.
1. Galop.
1. Polka Mazourka.
2. Valse.
2. Française, &c.

We take our polkas about as fast as a galop, and our galops about as slow as a polka. That exploded dance still reigns, and enjoys a steady popularity, so much so that double the time is given to it that is allowed for the valse or galop. This, English blood resents. For it is too bad, when the great parquet is in possession of but ten couple or so, and Strauss or Gungl is crashing, and we are flying down and flying round, while the hundred moderators seem like whirling lighted sticks, and the great lines of sitting ladies to be riding express in a "merry-go-round" about us—I say, at such a moment it is too bad to be brought up violently by a crash, with then an abrupt silence, as though everything had broken down.

Meanwhile business is thriving to the right and left. The dancing brings profit, and gentlemen in white ties fill up the pauses, by going in and scattering a Louis or so at the tables. M. Chevet outside under his glass shedding profits too by the occasion, and his inner temple is filled.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER XXX. FERMOR TRIED.

NEXT day, Captain Fermor went to the Manuels' house. It was one of his moody days. As he walked along there was bitterness, disappointment, hostility, all yeasting and frothing within him. He stalked in with majesty, and found Pauline and her brother; Violet was lying down with a headache.

"Headache?" said Fermor, looking round from one to the other, "this seems to be about the chronic state of things. Violet turns out to be regularly delicate."

"She is delicate," said the young man, looking at him with a dull hostility. "She requires care and tenderness."

Fermor never relished the tone of this man to him; and only that he thought quarrelling with a connexion or relative indecent to a degree, would have given him "a bit of his mind."

Pauline, always in alarm when such elements as tinder and powder were approaching each other, said, nervously, "Louis, dear, here are the letters—would you?"

He took them, and went his way.

Fermor then said, "I suppose I am not to see her. When will she be convalescent?"

"O, she will see you, of course. I am sure she is better. We had Sir Hopkins here."

"I know," said Fermor, bitterly. "I have had all the details. We are in rare good luck, it seems. We are never destined to set the Thames, much less any little river even, on fire."

Pauline looked at him with a look that he took for hostility. "I did not expect her to please your relation," she said. "He has been trained among clever women, and thinks—"

"You misapprehend," said Fermor, calmly. "The same idea occurred to others—to men who have travelled, and seen life, and—"

"Ah!" said Pauline, "I see—your Major Carter. I was afraid so. And do you listen to him, consult him about that poor child? O, Captain Fermor," she said, suddenly losing her scornful manner, and becoming very earnest and imploring, "you will not see her with his cold eyes. She would wither under them. I dread him. I have an instinct about him. I would

not trust a word that he would say. I am as convinced, as that I am standing here, there is something not right about that Major Carter."

This was a long speech for Pauline, but she went on more excitedly still.

"So you take your inspiration from him? No wonder that poor gentle child should wither away before it like a blast. Of course she is not of his pattern. He is clever, and skilful, and wicked, I am sure: you would be like a child in his hands, if he got an influence over you."

Deeply wounded by this supposition, Fermor coloured, and answered her with a voice that trembled.

"You are complimentary. I suppose I am a very weak person—as you say, most people can deal with me like a child." His words then became steeped in polite senna. "I suspect you are singular in your views. You will forgive me if I remind you that you live very quietly, and very retired, and do not come in contact with the world as we do. Most people here accept him, and I accept him."

At this moment Violet entered, her cheeks flushed, her hair a little rumpled. She ran up to Fermor—then shrank away and stopped short, as if expecting correction.

He felt his strength and moral power in presence of the two sisters. He saw this helpless child fluttering to his protection. He became softened and subdued. He asked how she was in a tender key of interest. Her face beamed. He told her she must take care of herself, and chided her affectionately. Sisterly eyes beamed on him with delight. Sisterly eyes were presently up-stairs in their own room.

Violet told him of Sir Hopkins, and how she had lost all courage to speak, and how she had been so dull and stupid.

"But why lose courage?" said Fermor, suddenly growing hard as he thought of this relation. "There is no visible danger. People do not carry fire-arms into drawing-rooms. You should try and train yourself to get over that. Even already, Violet, I am sorry to tell you, you have not succeeded in impressing favourably two persons whom it is all-important you should have impressed."

Her face showed such distress and utter blankness at this intelligence, that he almost repented of having told her.

"It may be repaired," he said. "But you must try and make an exertion. It is my duty

to tell you these things, you know. So you will do all you can to win over Sir Hopkins Pocock. It is of great importance."

"Don't, don't!" she said, piteously, as if asking for mercy. "Don't bring me to these cold severe people. I shall only be worse and worse."

Violet's eyes were dimming fast. Fermor shook his head impatiently, and passed out with a sigh of resignation. Poor Violet, filled with shame, grief, and sore distress, and with much physical pain in her head, was left alone to drop down upon the sofa.

"What shall I do! O, what shall I do!" she cried.

Sir Hopkins liked Major Carter's company so much, that he asked him to dinner. He had "quite taken a fancy to him," he told Fermor, as being "a man who knew men," and who had "rubbed about the world" a good bit.

"I like to mix up a few friends together like a salad," said Sir Hopkins. "I used to give famous little dinners to the consuls. This will suit you, I think, Charles. Only Major Carter, Sir Charles, yourself, the bishop, and that amusing creature, Showers."

"Showers! You ask him?" said Fermor, half aghast.

"O, he will keep us going. As lively a young fellow as I ever met. The bishop, a very superior person—come down here half for his health, you understand. Sir Charles I met at Vichy; odd his turning up in this way!"

This oddity really did not make so much difference; for, cast Sir Hopkins into any social pool, and by a sort of instinct he drifted up alongside blocks of the finer quality of timber. He contrived always to be washed against the mahogany, never the deals, of society. Thus he floated up to Sir Charles Longman. Bishops being always correct, ex-officio, he came speedily to have a pleasant acquaintance with Dr. Bridles, the Bishop of Leighton Buzzard, in whose diocese this little watering-place lay. These were the times when the great moors of the Church were but ill preserved, and such spiritual game as there was sadly poached—not from without, but from within, by a class whom the bishop was fond of calling Neo-Latitudinarians. The indefatigable way in which the bishop, taking down his ecclesiastical fowling-piece, beat the bushes, and woods, and fields, all day and night long, in drawing-rooms and clubs, at dinners and parties, armed with a search-warrant, and looking out warily for a Neo-Latitudinarian, was truly wonderful. He maintained that the ecclesiastical keepers were too remiss, and did not do work enough. And, having recently actually surprised one of those dangerous tramps with a hare at the end of a stick over his shoulder (it was a Mr. Blankiron, M.A., who had published the well-known book, "Dangers and Developments"), he had got him well covered, and had hit him badly with the well-known charge which Sir Hopkins had seen on the bookseller's counter.

Sir Hopkins waited on his rug, dressed, a velvet collar to his coat, his face at an angle, levelled at the door. Below, everything was ready.

The two Carters, father and son, were the first to enter. Carter, the father, as bright, and fresh, and clean as a very new biscuit; Carter, the son, docile dutifulness embodied in a dress-coat, following. He was "living and learning."

The two men of the world shook hands.

"A little early," said the major, gaily, "but a good fault that, as I told Somerset."

Presently, the bishop was announced, and came tripping in smartly, as if he were beating the stubble. His coat might have been newly japanned, and his trim legs seemed newly turned in ebony by a lathe. He said, "How d'ye do?" sharply, looked at the others suspiciously, as disguised Neo-Latitudinarians.

Then came Sir Charles Longman, with his glass firmly glued in, and advancing with hesitation, as if he had mistaken the room—finally, getting a fair view of his host, he rushed at him convulsively and secured his hand. Being then introduced to the bishop, he surveyed him nervously, seemed to trip over a stone, and then retired in confusion on the fender. After him came Fermor, and after Fermor, Showers.

Sir Hopkins went half way to the door to meet "his young friend" Showers, and shook him by the hand with cordiality, until Fermor writhed. He then introduced him to the bishop with a whisper like "Quite Sydney Smith, my lord," on which the latter drew back his elbow leg, and seemed about to level his piece. For, on hearing the name of that pleasant clerical jester, it seemed as if one of his keepers had called out "Mark!" Showers was elated by this patronage, and Fermor as much chafed; but the latter almost started when, on that pleasant Wamba's withdrawal into the window with young Somerset Carter, he heard the host whispering to Sir Charles and the bishop (and the three heads bent together over a vase on the low chimney-piece suggested a comic reproduction of The Doves in the Capitol) that his young friend was "monstrous clever, my lord, and really of quite a diplomatic turn." No wonder Fermor started.

The procession was then formed, the bishop leading, as if he had contracted for the funeral that was following, and his finely-turned legs being at times confused with the banisters; Sir Charles Longman, coming next, fell over logs of mahogany, great blocks of stone, and other impediments, and was recovered by the arm of his host. Showers and Fermor came behind, the former very gay, and, on this recent encouragement, becoming once more very free and insubordinate towards his companion.

It was a round table—perhaps a round flower-bed—with flowers and burnished glass that glittered and refracted, and fine fresh linen, marked with the Pocock cypher, which glistened like soft white satin. The host gave a short sketchy lecture on each of these points—not unentertaining—as the curtain went up.

Fish on. A little legend about the fish. Had

any one remarked the extraordinary scarcity of haddocks? Often and often, out at his government, he had thought wistfully of that delicacy—there were moments when he would have given worlds for it—a sort of craving. Always chose fish in person—not at all above it. Champagne lifted dripping out of a pail; little blocks dropped tingling into the glasses. Slight gossip upon wines. Sir Hopkins leading. “Widow falling off,” he said, alluding to the famous relic of M. Clicquot. “Think she is getting sweet; begin to prefer Moët.” In episcopal eyes it was a dissenting wine. “I am told,” said the bishop, holding his glass delicately, much as if he were about to play cup-and-ball with it, and were waiting till the string was steady, “I am told we shall shortly have no port—absolutely no port. We shall look for the old brands in vain. This is unsatisfactory. It comes of the levelling tone of the age. What shall we do at Buzzard’s Abbey. I say, what shall we do at visitations? Curates require port.”

“We must—er—pay for it,” said Sir Charles, suddenly, and seeing with difficulty, “as we—er—must, for everything good.”

Entrées. Lecture and illustrations. This a leg of lamb. Capon brown as mahogany. With a mysterious mayonnaise, which it was hinted by the host would, on his own death, become like the lost art of staining glass.

Apricot tart, ice-pudding, more light lecturing, a little politics, and a little local gossip. Going to be an agricultural show and ball. A surprised “No?” all round, with a disbelief as to your telling us so. But the question was, would old Bullington, who had the large dairy farm—would he send? On which query Sir Charles struggled nervously into utterance. “He is very—er—busy, as I know, his hands are full as—er—I may say. Son, I understand, making a poor sort of match; no money, and that sort of thing.”

“This is a very barren country, I am told,” said the diplomatist. “No heiresses about here—not a single one.”

Major Carter shook his head deferentially. “There is one, Sir Hopkins, and a real heiress.” Sir Hopkins doubted if he told him so. Really now? Yes. What would they say to forty thousand pounds? What would they say to an only child? What would they say to positive good looks, “bating a little delicacy? What would they say to a doting father? What—but ask our Captain Fermor there, who is quite *ami de la maison*.”

Fermor started. He really had not known of whom they were speaking. He was, in fact, so startled out of his natural coldness, that he said, “Forty thousand pounds! Are you quite sure?”

The bishop, listening keenly lest the birds should come his way, asked, And what views might that large sum represent—Dissenting or Jewish? He had long had a scheme in his head which would absorb that sum, ay, and a good deal more. It was surprising how Latitudinarianism was encroaching—combined, too, with Neologism. But he had a scheme for por-

tioning out the whole country into Circles; he would have proper persons appointed who would sift each Circle. The thing should be organised, but money would be wanting. A grand battue, in short.

CHAPTER XXXI. CLOUDS IN THE AIR.

FERMOR was beginning to grow sour and pettish at the restive course his life was taking. He felt towards it much as he had done towards a shying and kicking horse that he once rode.

In this train of mind, he again set the decorators at work, put together the new “Hachettes,” and went in to call at his next door neighbour’s. He wanted a little soothing, too; and often a successful visit, he said, was a glass of anisette to a Frenchman.

Miss Carlay’s eyes sparkled as he entered, and she half rose. The colour came to her cheeks. He was greatly delighted with her confidence in him, and the naïveté of her almost unconcealed liking.

“I would give the world to see *her*,” she said, fixing her soft, honest eyes on him. “When I am strong enough to drive out, which will be to-morrow, I shall get papa to take me where she is walking. I can look at her hard, without being rude.”

Fermor good naturedly passed over the false expression in this speech, for he might have told her it would be rudeness all the same; then said, “Why not see her in the regular way? I tell you what, Violet shall come and see *you*.”

“No, no,” said she, eagerly, and colouring. “Not for the world.”

“Why not?” said Fermor, still watching her.

“Violet!” she said. “O, what a charming name! And I am *sure* suits her.”

“Yes,” he said, carelessly, “it does. I confess, I rather fancy a name of a more neutral tint. You expect everything to be in harmony—to be shrinking like a violet.”

“And I am sure she shrinks. Tell me now.”

“Yes,” said Fermor, laughing. “She does—almost a little too much. I almost like your name—Mary—better.”

“O no, no,” said she, in some confusion. “You only *say* that.”

“I speak of the name in general,” he said, gravely.

At this instant the face of Sir Hopkins was looking round the edge of the door, as if he had his eye to a telescope. “May I come in? Eh?”

“My dear Charles, you here! Just dropped in to see Mr. Carlay. Carter was to have met me—Miss Carlay, I am sure. Charles, I must ask you—”

The delicate girl received the visitor with perfect self-possession. No shell had exploded in that drawing-room. She went to meet him with the smile and with the welcome of well-bred acquaintanceship. She was sorry her father was out, and seemed not in the least embarrassed at having to play the conversational game against two gentlemen. She uttered the usual hopes and questions. Was Sir Hopkins going to stay with them long, and how did he like the place?

Immensely, Sir Hopkins said. Did not know when he had liked a place so much. Though, indeed, to a man who had roughed it a good deal in the world, all places should be like all beds—very much the same.

"Indeed," said the girl, half shyly, half earnestly, and with an animation that became her wonderfully, "our little ways and manners must seem very trifling to you, who have travelled so many, many miles, and have managed those dreadfully savage people. I would give the world to know how it is done," she added, the shyness being now all absorbed in the earnestness, "and how even a beginning is made." This was not the venial hypocrisy of the drawing-room; for Fernor had indeed invested his relation's achievements with an air of adventure.

"Why, you don't tell me," Sir Hopkins said, in great delight, "that you have been reading up the Blue Books? Where did you pick up about the Waipiti?"

Fernor and Sir Hopkins went away together. Pretty much the same feeling was in both minds. "My dear boy," said the latter, detaining him gently, "we older fellows may not have as fresh a taste, but I fancy I know a girl about as well as you know a horse. And, positively, if I had to choose between our good little innocent rustic and *that* girl, I declare——" And he finished the sentence in an expressive squeeze of his lips. "To say nothing," he added, in a lower voice, "of the money-bags. Ha! ha! I suppose I am getting old and exploded—though the F. O., I am glad to say, does not think so. Where were your eyes, to choose her in preference to the sister, even?"

Fernor was bursting to say something haughty, but restrained himself.

"If I had been at your elbow, Master Charles, while you were choosing, I declare to you, upon—my—sol—emn—word of honour," Sir Hopkins put little jerks between each word, "if I were ten years younger, I would go to Miss Manuel within the next half-hour, and offer her the vacancy in my house. What a governor's wife she would be! We would rule the colonies. I think you were a little in awe of her, eh? I remark she has a quiet decisive manner about her, which (naturally enough) *you* would not relish. Only for her, how would it have turned out, *I* should like to know? Clever, clever, woman that. I admire her."

"I assure you, sir," said Fernor, hotly, "in *that* view you are quite astray."

"Perhaps so," said Sir Hopkins, carelessly, "perhaps so. But a word of advice, Charles. Don't have the look of being directed by any whole family. I say the look."

How Fernor fumed and glowed out of Sir Hopkins's presence may be imagined by those who know him even a little.

His visits to the Manuels became spasmodic and intermittent. When he paid them, he sat there gloomily, and as it were under a sense of injury. And when he found them looking

at him mournfully and with wonder, he rose impatiently, and went away almost abruptly. They knew not what to make of him. At last it came to this, that he actually stayed away three whole days, and the night of that third day was for Violet one of the most wretched of her life. All her thoughts seemed to be seething and boiling in that small head; her bed seemed to be turned into a furnace. She suffered a weight of agony, and when the steady daylight of nine o'clock came, she rose exhausted and trembling, with a worn face, but with eyes that sparkled like some of the lamps of the night before.

The anxious sister, Pauline, was in Violet's room as soon as she heard her stirring. There was a little wildness in her eyes.

"Darling Violet," said her sister, going up to her, "this is dreadful. You will wear yourself into a grave. Your health cannot bear it, I know it cannot."

"I am better this morning," she said, "much better, if I could only make myself sleep."

Pauline looked at her, irresolute as to how she should begin. "We have been thinking and talking it all over this morning; and now, my dear darling Violet, this is to be considered, and is worth considering. You were very happy a short time ago, until certain things took place, and you are not strong, and much anxiety or sorrow would wear you out. Now, dearest, is it not better, before it is *too* late, to have courage to go back. I *fear* we have made a mistake. We, I say, who ought to have been more sensible, and to have known better. Now what we have thought is this—and it is a cruel thing, darling, to propose—would it not be better, after all, to have done with this—altogether?"

Violet's glistening eyes had been widening and distending all this time. It was only at the last word that she caught her sister's meaning. She broke out in a fright.

"No, no! I can't. I could not. And to come from me. No, I *could* not, indeed," she added, piteously.

"Ah," said Pauline, in tones of the softest compassion, "that is it, darling. Is it not better that it *should* come from you, than that it should come from——"

"What!" said the other, excitedly. "Do you know anything? Do you believe it? Do you——"

She was so excited that her sister said to her, "No, no! it is only that I *fear*."

"Then you *have* heard something. He told you," said Violet, distractedly. "O, I had a presentiment that this was coming!" And she lay back on the sofa and panted nervously, and a look of scared terror came to her face that quite alarmed Pauline. She ran to her.

"It is nothing," she said. "I am all wrong, indeed I am. I know nothing, and have heard nothing, upon my word and honour, as I stand here. It is only some of my foolish sense and caution. Won't you believe me when I tell you so?"

The other raised herself, drew a slow sigh of relief, then gave a child's smile.

"You terrified me," she said. "I am getting foolish and nervous. But it is nonsense, all nonsense. He never does anything without a purpose, and I shouldn't be surprised," she added, with a sudden flash of gaiety, "if he was what he calls trying me. Ah. There it is."

Her sister was so relieved at this change from a scene she dreaded, that she accepted the far-fetched fancy, and with her arms about this fluttering Violet, even fortified it. Presently the sisters, by mutual encouragement, had worked it into actual pleasant proof of attachment and devotion, Violet finding in it something to rejoice at.

The maid who—now a long time ago—had thought Fermor "lovely," had been noting Violet's worn face, the weary lines of pain upon her cheeks, and the tightened look about her forehead. She was a "smart" girl, and glowing ribbons always were fluttering from her caps like pennants from a mast. All through she had taken a deep interest in the love-affair, and knew perfectly all the ebbs and flows of that uncertain current. For Fermor she had the deepest admiration. Had any one introduced the well-known Apollo Belvidere into her associations, that famous type of plastic beauty would have exactly satisfied her as a standard. Yet the Hero himself, when she threw open the door for him, hurried past her up-stairs, not rude or blunt, but wholly unconscious of her, and of all her ribbon-flags.

She had long guessed the state of things. The two sisters were fond of her, and talked with her often. She amused them with legends of the ladies and gentlemen of her own sphere, when she was busy with their dresses, and Violet sat with her long hair like a nun's veil on her head. "Jane" had sore suspicions about this business; and was convinced that the whole affair had been "mismanaged." Through Fermor's esquire, Mr. Bates, with whom she was intimate, she learnt more than they. Through that military gentleman's gentleman the maid knew all, and she was determined that very morning to "speak her mind," while there was yet time.

Violet was a little hurried and excited in her speech. "I don't sleep," she said, nervously; "last night, I never closed my eyes once. I don't know what is the reason." She was now in spasms of agitation. She got up suddenly and went over to the bed, on which she flung herself. The maid looked on in sore distress. Not for many minutes could all her soothing take effect.

Poor Violet felt she could confide in her, as indeed she might. "O Jane, Jane, I fear—I do so fear—that they have been changing him to me—I know they have."

"No, no, miss," the maid said, with the smile of superiority. "Not at all; you make too much of it, miss, indeed you do. But," she added, looking round mysteriously, "I know what it is."

Violet became earnest, and looked at her steadily. "What is it?" she said.

Jane was thinking of the tactique popular below. "It's all wrong, miss. The thing has been mismanaged. I've seen it all along."

Thus poor Violet catching eagerly at any plank, and beseeching her to tell, Jane became like an old fairy godmother, whom this young creature had come to consult, and to get a philtre. With great wisdom (and with some difficulty in the choice of words, for Jane had delicacy), the maid expounded the true secret of success in such affairs, and the little old-fashioned amatory cruelties which still obtained in the servants' hall.

"It don't do," said the fairy godmother, "to let a gentleman come too easy, or come too often. They don't like it themselves, don't gentlemen. There are days," added Jane, as an illustration, "when I make believe not to see Mr. Bates, it might be in the street, or it might be on the road; and though I don't pretend to say that there's anything going on *there*, still, miss, you can have no manner of idea how he does take it. You see, when they have it all their own way, they come to take it as easy as—anything."

This seemed like truth to Violet, to whom anything like a little salvation in this emergency was welcome. Her eyes distended, and her breath came and went as the fairy godmother explained the mystery. The introduction of Mr. Bates as an illustration to the workings of the charm on him especially, did not import any burlesque into the matter. She even began to regard him with an interest which would have amazed that simple soldier. She was told how, on certain days, he was received with an unbounded affection, purposely exaggerated to lead him into some slight forwardness; which, on the next occasion, would be seized on as an opening for treating him with the most mortifying and insulting neglect. A short course of this fitful treatment was enough to "take him down"—to reduce him to an unmanly and grovelling degradation. From whence he would be, as unexpectedly and unreasonably, lifted from this level to the sunshine of unbounded favour.

"But," said the fairy godmother, coming more to the point, "if there was another gentleman, miss, as could be found, and I know of such as could be easily got, and willing, and whose place, indeed, by rights it *ought* to be—that were the way!"

Violet's eyes opened still wider. She coloured a little, for she understood.

"The captain," said the fairy godmother, "was a charming gentleman, so fine and so high in his manners. But all gentlemen were the same in *that* point. They required to be 'kept up and stirred.' Now, couldn't Miss Violet just try it a little—ever so little—and see how it would answer? Not to be just 'quite so ready,' but more 'stand off,' and, above all, just 'lean a little' to that good but 'soft' gentleman, Mr. Hanbury. Mark her words, if in a day or two the remedy had not the most startling result."

"Mr. Hanbury? He has gone away."
 "He went away, miss, but he's come back. Business, he says. He has been hanging about. I saw him myself only yesterday?"

The child Violet became grave at this news. She listened, first with curiosity, then with hope, then with confidence, finally with devotion. Here was a reasonable chance. She caught at it. She began to think herself a mere infant, whose own folly was the cause of all.

"Now, miss," said the godmother, "there's another thing. You should have the two gentlemen together here of a night; just a nice little party of a dozen to look on; for it's the *being* done *before* people that makes all the effect. No gentleman, miss, likes to see another gentleman put up before him, where there's people by. As sure as I am standing here, miss, if you only get your mamma to have a few people in to tea, and have the two gentlemen together, and be a little partial to Mr. Hanbury, giving him his tea first, or sitting with him in a corner, or even," added Jane, with a little hesitation, "putting a flower in his button-hole—as sure as you do this, everything will be well in the morning."

So, when her dressing was over, she had been changed into a little conspirator; for from the straightforward Pauline—but who, indeed, was conspiring in her own way—it was thought best to conceal the whole.

CHAPTER XXXII. VIOLET'S PLOT.

WHEN Violet had come down, Pauline was astonished to see that Violet's eyes were as glittering as before, and she went about with a nervous vivacity. The look of hopelessness was gone.

Very soon this restlessness had worked itself to a point. "Dear Pauline," she said, as if asking a favour, "I am thinking of going out for a walk to the library (my head is so hot), and of taking Jane."

"To be sure, darling," said her sister, delighted that she was taking interest in such a thing as a library. "The very thing; and get yourself a nice amusing book." She assumed—this delicate sister—that Violet would prefer going without her, for they could not avoid coming to that one subject, and, therefore, she did not propose herself as a companion. But this was really the first step in Violet's little conspiracy. She had a curious and irresistible instinct that she would meet with some one of the characters with whom her little plot was to deal. And this is often a very sure and faithful instinct. Jane, who always associated every progress outside the house indistinctly with Mr. Bates, attended her with alacrity.

The librarian talked professionally, and was glad of the opportunity. "There's a book," he said, "I am keeping for Major Carter, *The Virgins of Mayfair*; they say it is by Mrs. Mackenzie Tollemache. He is to call for it himself at *one* o'clock. The major knows the world so well," added the librarian, with a smile.

But her instinct was not to fail her, for presently she saw John Hanbury, with a heavy

gloom upon his face, smoking a cigar dismally, lounging past with heavy steps. He saw her in a second, and his face became a conflagration. Now, Violet felt, was the moment to get out her heavy cloak and dark lantern, if ever she *was* to be a conspirator. Hanbury had passed irresolutely, and then, turning, saw Violet's soft face looking out at him with encouragement and sympathy. He came back as if he had been called. Violet welcomed him with a warmth almost extravagant. Jane was looking on from the inner shop with approval. So Violet had made her first step in the character of a conspirator.

Hanbury was confounded at his reception. Strange thoughts came tumbling tumultuously through his brain, wild dreams for the future rose in his head. Could it be that she had at last seen that other in his true colours?

"Shall I take this?" said the library messenger, now going out and pointing to the *Virgins of Mayfair*, who were on the ground, bound together with strong twine. "No, no," said the librarian; "I see the major crossing."

Instantly Violet had become almost coquettish, and spoke to Hanbury familiarly, almost as if he had never been away.

Major Carter was looking in at the window at the title-pages of the new books.

"Indeed," faltered Hanbury, "you are *most* kind; only too good; but I thought——"

Now entered Major Carter, fresh from his window studies. He was astonished and delighted to meet Miss Violet. Little did he know the pleasure that was in store for him when he crossed over. Could he help her to choose a book? "You have kept that new thing for me, Mr. —; all thanks. This is," to Violet, "one of Mrs. Tollemache's, whom we *all* know, so you can imagine why I was dying to see it."

In the presence of this skilful player Violet felt her histrionic power a little chilled, but she thought of what was before her, and set herself to work with wonderful purpose and resolution. "No," she said; "Mr. Hanbury has always helped me. He will choose me something, for I believe he knows my taste." Poor Violet! This was spoken awkwardly enough, but it imposed on the two gentlemen. "I must go back now," added she, getting even bolder in her little strategy. "I am going to ask Mr. Hanbury to see me home. Jane has business—marketing, and what not."

Hanbury, scarcely knowing whether he was living or breathing, glowed a delighted consent, and this wonderful Violet, whom some fairy had metamorphosed into a perfect little intrigante, hurried into the back portion of the shop, and whispered her maid that she must walk after Major Carter and watch did he go near Brown's-terrace.

Hanbury was to know strange fluctuations in his treatment, for he had scarcely walked a hundred yards in this new tumult of happiness, when Violet apparently began to weary of his society. The worn lines began to show in her

face, just as invisible writing ink comes out before a fire. "I won't take you any farther," she said; "indeed, no. It is very kind of you to come so far. Please leave me here. Do. I *must* go by myself."

Hanbury was left gasping in the road, with his heart all filled with grief. Still there was consolation, something to turn over and think of in that incomprehensible change of manner.

Later in the day the maid came back, after being detained rather longer than her mission required. She brought good news, however; for the major had gone straight to Brown's-terrace, no doubt charged with news.

Joyfully our Violet flew up-stairs, began to smoothe her hair and work at personal decoration. The excitement had given a brilliancy to her face. Ribbons, lace, dress, ornaments, all of the best, were got out, for it was now certain that Fermor, having quaffed the elixir, would come—come in excitement and with all speed.

Her sister saw the change with delight and wonder, but forebore to ask a single question, even to put out a hint. She ran up to her mother with some good news, and to enjoin caution.

"Violet has a little mystery of her own, poor child. It is going well again, I can see. Mr. Fermor has been writing, and, I suspect, will be here in a moment. I knew it was some mistake. Don't let us notice anything, mother dear, and I shall watch for Louis and warn him against any of his blunt speeches."

Mrs. Manuel, whose face was arid and worn with old private sorrows, where tears seemed to have worn for themselves water-sheds and gullies, smiled with some pleasure. Such news was lighting up her darkness.

"I was thinking, Pauline," said Violet, from the window, with her face to the garden, "of a little plan, a little scheme of *my own*;" an announcement received with genuine delight by her sister.

"To be sure, dear," she said; "let us hear it. Mamma will be delighted."

"I want," said Violet, still at the window, "to—to—give a little party. You know we have been here so long and never—"

Pauline answered with genuine wonder. "A party, dear! Good gracious! No, why should we do that?"

"O, we must!" said Violet, turning round, and hastily crowding a number of reasons together. "It is expected. We ought to have done it long ago. I am sure they say so. O, Pauline, indeed, *indeed* we must; and—and—I should so like it."

Sisterly instinct had now at last divined that something more was asked for than a mere party, and Pauline was presently as eager as Violet.

CHAPTER XXXIII. A FAREWELL.

"WILL you ever come back again?" said Fermor to Miss Carlay. "Scarcely, I should say. Chance rarely brings friends again together at a place of this sort at the same time. No; you

will be at the west when I shall be at the east. It is always the way."

"We are to go to the south of France," she said, speaking this to the corner of her dress. "Papa likes quiet and retirement. We shall become regular rustics, and live among the vines and honest peasants. You, we are told, are to have a different sort of life, out among the Eastern tribes, conquering and ruling. Something splendid and exciting."

"No," said Fermor, with some embarrassment, "nothing is settled as yet. Of course I might, if I chose."

"And you *will* choose," said she, timidly, but looking at him. "I am sure of it; I told papa so this morning."

Fermor smiled. There was a refreshing naturalness about this girl that was always piquant. A new view at every turn of the road. "That would suit my nature, I suppose," he said, inquiringly, "ruling and conquering?"

She dropped her eyes again. Then, after a moment, looked at him. "I—I think so," she said.

"Quite right," he said, approvingly. (He held always a sort of paternal manner to her.) "Well answered! I should like being captain over slaves, in opening their brute intellects."

"You should go," she said, cagerly. "We should so like to hear of you."

"You are anxious," he said, "to get me away."

"No, indeed," she said; "you misjudge me. If you do not go, surely the south of France is as far removed from England—at least to all intents and purposes—as India. You will never come *that* way."

(This "nature" is really charming, thought he, because she makes no pretence to anything else.)

"We never know how things may turn out," he said. "I could no more tell where I shall be in three months' time than I could the age of the moon. It may be England, India,—perhaps the south of France," he added, smiling. "It is all on the cards."

She smiled too. "You don't mean *that*?" she said.

"I can mean nothing," said he, importing one of his mysterious aphorisms, "where I know nothing. I confess you have read me right in one point. I feel a call towards the East. It is the country for me; and but for the absurd forms and formulas of our diplomatic service—no matter. People somehow seem to *expect* me to go there. Remember, the south of France is on the road to India."

"O, how charming it would be," said she, in one of her unconventional little bursts of delight. "Some morning, perhaps, we should hear of a strange gentleman at the gate, and we should be wondering, and then it would turn out to be you. Though, indeed, I should know for certain that it *was* you as soon as I heard there was a stranger."

"And do you mean to say," said Fermor, "that a morning call from a mere conventional

being like myself would give you any pleasure? because, if so——"

"Indeed it would," she answered readily, and without hesitation.

She was so simple and so natural, he could have gone on "playing" on her for an hour more with fresh entertainment, only he was obliged to go.

"Good-by! good-by!" he said, rising. "As I say nothing is settled, you must be prepared for that morning call in the south. For I suspect I shall have to rule over the Easterns after all. There is something grand, as you say, in being a satrap. I feel a call to it: and so," added Fermor, gliding into a tender cadence, "good-by, dear Miss Carlay. We have had some pleasant hours together; at least I have."

The girl said nothing. Fermor held her hand a moment, let it go suddenly, and then left the room. Without any "pronounced" sensation in this farewell, there was still a secret hint as of something dramatic and touching. Fermor's "exquisite steering" (his expression to himself) had given this tone to the situation. At the door he came full on Mr. Carlay.

"We are going away," said he, "as no doubt you have been told. I know very few, and scarcely one that I care for here; so it is not a great sacrifice for me. She would like to remain."

"Then why go?" said Fermor.

"This air of the south has been ordered for her. The winter is drawing on. And what is to become of you? I am told you are to go to India full of honours."

"Well, so they say," said Fermor, greatly gratified with this universal nomination of himself to office.

"I am sure you will succeed. Write to us—to me. You have done great good in this house; you have really cheered her up. It was kind of you to come in and talk with her. A grim stiff fellow like me is no companion for a girl."

This concluded his farewell with father and daughter. The whole scene quite filled his mind. The Manuel family faded out and became small figures at a distance. At all events, there was nothing pressing. Thus do painters, by heightening the colours in one portion of a picture, dim, without touching, other parts near them.

That evening, when Fermor came in triumphant, he found Major Carter waiting, who had something to tell him.

The Eastport season was indeed coming to an end. Sharp blasts were coming from the sea, charged with daggers and razors. The polite world was flitting away. Every day, at the newly-opened railway station, porters had busy work of it, labelling dark and heavy boxes for "London." And in first-class windows was seen a crowd of appeals, growing every day more frequent, crying out piteously, "To Let," "To Let." Every one was eager to be gone; once the rush had set in, and the air was filled with declarations, "We

are going on Monday," "We are going on Tuesday," &c. &c. The haste and hurry was almost indecent, and not unminged with contempt. It was as though some family with whom they had been intimate had been suddenly discovered to be unsuitable persons to know, and to be "dropped" with all speed. Next year, when the season came on, the people would be bowing and greeting Eastport again with the pleasant effrontery of worldlings. Thus, in a day or two, had Sir Hopkins Pocock, C.B., passed away, his despatch-box being put away under the seat. Thus, also, in a week or two, was Lady Laura Fermor and her daughters busy upstairs putting up their camp-kettles and knapsacks, once more getting ready for the road.

The Eastport sea-breezes, and the comparative inactivity of this campaign, had not been without profit for the veteran commander. If it had been otherwise, it would have made little difference, as, however worn and footsore, she would have marched out of the place with the same spirit. Yet, though no serious operations had been undertaken, some successes of a substantial order had crowned their arms. It did, indeed, seem likely that what might be called a fort—Fort Piper—was about to fall. That stronghold, it will be remembered, was a sort of child, but of good expectations, and well worthy sitting down before and investing in all form. The ripe charms of Alicia Mary had affected him.

"Good God!" said Fermor, with strong disgust, as he met the child day after day in his mother's apartments. "You don't mean to say you are thinking of that infant! I declare it would be a sin—a crime! I could not stand by and look on. His friends ought to interfere. I am ashamed of you, Alicia."

For once the veteran sergeant lost command of her temper. This was tampering with ranks. Her voice trembled. "None of this," she said, walking up to him with a look he did not soon forget. "You must not interfere with the girls. We have had work enough of it, without help from any one, and I won't suffer any interference now. You have done for yourself in the way that suits you best, and no one has said a word to you. It is only fair that we should have our way."

Fermor withdrew in some disorder. The Boy positively adored Alicia Mary. There were guardians in the way, it is true, but providentially no Chancery. And it was to sit down before these guardians that Lady Laura was now preparing to march. A ridiculous disparity, said the malicious. Disparity, answered the commander, when he was nephew to Sir Thomas! Disparity, when the estates were worth so much! Away with such puerile objections.

Violet kept her mournful watches; only the inspiration of her maid sustained her. Fermor came in a day or so. He diffused joy over the mansion; but he was moody and "short." Violet welcomed him, after the first shock, with some pleasure. The elixir was working. Pauline did not come down to him; her pre-

sence, she thought, would only cloud the air more. Very soon his grievances came to the surface. He had observed, he said, "your friend, Mr. Hanbury, hanging about." This was more of the elixir. What did *that* mean, pray? Violet, a little flurried, called up her presence of mind. She did not know, she said. She supposed he had business, or some such reason. With a voice that trembled a little, she added, that he was "very good," and that people seemed to like him.

"O, that is it," said Fermor, getting up, and walking over to the window. "I see." Though a little terrified, Violet was pleased, for here were signs of the elixir. Fermor turned round, smiling with grim scorn. "I see!" he repeated. He was thinking how this poor child was inconsistently showing "the little game" of the family.

The faint lines in her face, and her secret suspense, struck him with a little pity.

"O, by the way," she said, with a sort of nervous coquetry, "I want you to do something for me. I have a plan—a great little scheme. It is all my own plan entirely. I am going to give a little party."

Fermor started. "A party! Give a party!"

"It's to be a *little* party," said Violet, coming up to him, and now filled with misgivings as to the policy of her proposal. "Only a few, I assure you."

"That of course you can arrange as you like," he said; "I only give my opinion. If you take my advice, you would not think of such a thing. It is at least laughable. Everybody is gone away. It will only end in failure."

"But you will come? If you were to know how I have set my heart on it."

"On my coming?" said Fermor, smiling in spite of himself. "Well, I suppose the great little scheme must go on."

A week more, and more fashionable Israelites had gone out of the place. There were no traces even of the place where the Laura Fermor tents had been pitched a few days back. The fashionable London *Fremdenblatt* had announced them at their hotel in Dover-street. Sir Hopkins, said the same register, was staying at Wycherly's, St. James's-square, genteel and costly chambers, well known to colonists.

Every one was arriving somewhere in Town; and Eastport, abandoned and forsworn, began to have very much the look of the field where a gay circus has flourished temporarily, where the horses had galloped round, and scarlet and tinsel fluttered, but where now there was only the mark of a worn sawdust ring.

Fermor fumed against this abandonment. Things, as regards his personal affairs, had settled into a dead level. There was a lull. But he would have preferred something that he might work against. He went to see the Manuels fitfully, and bestowed some gloom and mystery on them. The brother seldom appeared to him, and when he did, he seemed to be held as it were in a leash. But Violet, still

anxious and still fluttering, said to all their gentle remonstrances, "Leave it to me. Do, do now. We shall settle it all the night of the little party." It was to bring forth a new and perfect understanding, a resolution of all difficulties, even the naming of a near and certain day for the nuptials, and universal happiness and delight. "Leave it all to me! I know," said Violet, with a little air of mystery. And she had now come to brood anxiously over this eventful night, as though it were finally to determine her fate.

Fermor, too, was waiting another event. Sir Hopkins had said he would write to him from London as soon as everything was settled, and "he saw his way finally." Someway Fermor had begun to have a restless feeling; for this letter did not come. His family had not written either.

But there was yet another letter expected which did not come. Major Carter had said to him, "I have written, as you wished it, to old Gainsborough. He is the most wonderful gatherer-up of old stories in nature. Quartered in Spain, as I told you. He knows everything about everybody, and, depend upon it, we shall have a very full and curious letter touching a certain family. I have no right to say a word of my own suspicions. I feel it was going beyond what I ought to have done. The only thing I can do is to support what I say, or own that I have been wrong. *You* have no part in it whatever. I have forced it on you."

Thus it came to a certain Monday, for which evening Miss Manuel had asked a few friends to tea, and music.

IN THE POLISH CAUSE.

LAST summer, three young students, Wilhelm Unman from Stockholm, Gabriel Jacobson, and John Eriksson from Strömsholm,* proceeded to Poland to share in the struggle for liberty. The Stockholm paper, the *Afton-blad*, gives a detailed report of their adventures and their fate, of which an outline might perhaps not be uninteresting to English readers.

They left Stockholm on the 3rd of July, 1863, and went by steamer to Stettin, and from thence by railway to Rokietnice, a small station near the town of Posen, not daring to enter the latter for fear of being arrested. Through less frequented roads they now proceeded, sometimes walking, sometimes riding with peasants, to the frontier. After having been hiding here for some time with some Polish men of property, they found an opportunity of crossing the frontier, and learnt that a corps of insurgents were in the town of Zayorowo, not many miles distant. They went thither and presented themselves to the chief of the corps as volunteers; but, before they had yet entered on duty, a Russian force, greatly superior in numbers,

* The same three young men mentioned in the article entitled *From the Pen of a Pole*, *All the Year Round*, vol. xi., page 448.

advanced towards the town, and caused the insurgents to retreat hastily after a skirmish, during which and the retreat, however, several were cut off and made prisoners. During the search which followed of all the houses in the town, the three Swedes, who were considered suspicious by the Russians, and who could not produce any legitimation, were arrested. This was on the 12th of July.

From Zayorowo they had to march to Konin with the rest of the prisoners, and were here led before General Kostanda, who in a harsh and contemptuous tone directed some questions to them, first in the Russian and afterwards in the Polish language. When one of the Polish peasants, who had been taken prisoner as an insurgent at the same time with them, ventured to say to the general that they were foreigners and did not understand his words, this man was, at a signal from the general, laid hold of by the Cossacks, who struck him fearfully with their knouts, because he had had the audacity to speak without being spoken to. After having been detained as prisoners for some time at the main guard-house of Konin, the Swedes were, by the interposition of some Finnish officers, removed to a private house, which had been prepared as a prison, and where they were allowed to receive the food that was sent them by generous and sympathising inhabitants of the town. When placed before the general to be tried, they declared at first that, as they had not been taken with arms in hand, and as no one could prove that they had joined in any fight, it was unjust to consider them as insurgents, and they demanded their rights respected as Swedish subjects. The general laughed disdainfully at their words about rights, and explained that as they were unable to show that they were there with any right and on lawful business, he would make short work of it, and hang them as spies. They soon learnt that this was no empty threat, and at the advice of the Finnish officers they therefore acknowledged that it had been their intention to enter the ranks of the insurgents as volunteers.

On the 11th of August they were taken, together with a number of other prisoners, by railway to Warsaw, and lodged in the citadel, in the casemates of which they met with many imprisoned Poles, a great number of whom belonged to the flower of the nobility of that unfortunate country. Every day some of them were led away in order to be hung, shot, or transported to Siberia, but in none of them could be discovered the slightest trace of despondency or dejection. They were indifferent as to how soon and in what manner they were led to death. It was even a pleasure to think that the way in which they suffered death might contribute to place the barbarity of the Russians in the right light. While here in the citadel, the Swedes secretly received from the National Government a supply of money amounting to sixty roubles silver, or nine pounds ten shillings.

On the 19th of August, the three young

Swedes were led out of the citadel without knowing where they were going, what was intended with them; whether they were to suffer death, or—as there was more reason to believe—to be sent to the interior of Russia or Caucasasia, and there stuck into some regiment or other as soldiers. Instead of this, they had to march with a number of other prisoners to the great fortress of Modlin, some twenty miles north of Warsaw. The march was an extremely forced one, and the Russian captain who commanded the convoy allowed the prisoners no rest, nor even a drop of water with which to quench their thirst.

It was not till after they had been at Modlin, as prisoners with hard labour for some time, that they were informed that they were sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour at Modlin fortress. On arriving at the citadel, they were at once clothed in the dress of the convicts, consisting of a grey jacket with black sleeves and a square black patch on the back, trousers and cap also grey, the latter with a black cross in front. The front half of their heads was shaved from ear to ear, and this process was afterwards renewed every Saturday. Their resting-place was formed by a wooden pallet with a bag of straw, so filled with different sorts of vermin that it was difficult, if not impossible, to get any rest. Their food was unfit for human beings. The fortress must always be provided with provisions for seven years, and, for the prisoners, the oldest and most damaged supplies were always taken. For breakfast, they got a dish of "bash," a sort of sour soup, of a loathsome and indefinable nature, the smell and look of which would already have been enough to disgust any one the least dainty; for dinner, "kapusta," cabbage, made from the outer and coarsest leaves; now and then, for a change, a "grout" or stir-about of old and damaged groats, and in which would be found, side by side with all sorts of casual and less agreeable ingredients, some few potatoes, which were considered as a great delicacy. The daily ration of bread was two pounds, often mixed with sand, straw, and other dirt.

Beyond the number of convicts for usual crimes, there were between five and six hundred political prisoners at Modlin. The work began at five o'clock in the morning, and was continued all day long, without any regular time for rest. Such of the prisoners as were artisans had to work in workshops, the rest at digging, wheeling away the earth, sweeping, throwing snow, or the like. The only time they tasted meat was on the anniversary of the emperor's accession to the throne, when each received four ounces of roasted entrails drawn on a stick, with which to celebrate the day. In winter each man was given a fur jacket of sheep's skin, to be worn under the grey jacket, but they were so full of vermin that the Swedes found it impossible to put them on.

About Christmas-time the adjutant of the fortress told our three young men that they had been so far pardoned that their term of im-

prisonment had been shortened from twelve to six months' duration; and on the Russian first of February (February 13th), the commandant gave them one silver rouble, or three shillings and twopence-halfpenny, for all three of them. They now put on some good winter clothing, which the National Government had forwarded to Modlin for them, together with some money. From the fortress they were escorted to the burgomaster or mayor of Nowydwor, who sent them further under escort to Warsaw, where they were taken to the president of police; but as he was not present at the moment, they were lodged in the police-cell, where they were forgotten until the 27th of February. On that day they received at last a compulsory passport, commanding them, after having been taken to the frontier, to go straight home to Sweden through Prussia.

When they asked whether they were not to have any money for this forced journey, they were told that the necessary money would be handed to them at the railway station by a colonel. Arrived at the station, they found the said colonel who had the military command there, but he declared that he had no money for them, and when they said that they would thus be exposed to starvation already while on their way from Warsaw to the frontier, he answered "Qu'importe?" (what matters?) and when they made some further protestations, he called some soldiers, who dragged them to the railway carriage and thrust them in. Under strict surveillance they thus got to the first Prussian station, but when their Russian companions here demanded a receipt for their safe delivery from the station-master, they received instead a torrent of abuse for having brought these persons without also the necessary money for their further journey.

A Polish gentleman, who chanced to be present at this scene, helped them on to Bromberg, where he got rooms for them at an hotel. After a short stay in this town, two of these companions in misfortune proceeded home, but the third, Mr. Unman, remained, as he had made acquaintance with several Polish patriots, and felt a strong desire still to partake in the struggle against the Russians.

At this time an expedition from the province of West Prussia was preparing; the plan was to cross the frontier at different points in five small divisions. Unman proceeded to the town of Strasburg, where he joined a party of insurgents, and crossed with them the border river Drewendz. Several skirmishes took place, but towards the end of March he was, with a number of other insurgents, driven across the frontier and taken prisoner by Prussian military, who brought them to the town of Lautenburg. After a short examination, Unman was taken to Strasburg, in the prison of which town he remained until the beginning of May. Here he was shown an arrest order from Berlin for "preparing to commit treasonable acts." Later he was taken to Posen, the capital of the province, where he, as well in the prison

as by the trials and examinations, became a witness to the indescribable tyranny with which the Prussians treat the Polish population, and the complete lawlessness which reigns here, where the civilised Prussian state has a strange nationality in its power. The treatment was much worse than that to which the Russians subjected their prisoners in the prisons of investigation. During his stay here, forty-two Polish landed proprietors were sent to Berlin to be arraigned for high treason, on suspicion of having favoured the Polish insurrection.

No evidence having been forthcoming against him, Mr. Unman was at last taken from the citadel of Posen, in order to receive a passport for the homeward journey; but, as he had not money sufficient for that purpose, he was thrown into the police cell till he could procure some. From Posen he was soon taken to Kosten, where he was lodged in a reformatory, which was made use of as a political prison. He meanwhile wrote home for money, but this letter was not sent off till a month later, and then the date had been altered so as to read July for June. A letter written from Strasburg, with the permission of the authorities, to the Swedish consul at Stettin, had never been forwarded.

He remained at Kosten till August 20th, when he received from the National Government a small sum of money, which enabled him to get to Stettin, where the Swedo-Norwegian consul received him with great kindness, and procured him free passage by the steamer Orion to Gothenburg, and thence to Stockholm.

QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER IX. AND LAST.

SIR WILLIAM LONG had called many times upon Lily in her new home, hovering about her with a throbbing heart, and a declaration of love faltering upon his tongue. That pure and tender love had rolled back twenty years of his life. He had feasted his full upon all the vain pleasures of the world, and had become weary of them; but now, with the image of Lily's sweet innocent face ever before him, his zest for life was renewed: he felt that there was yet something better worth living for than all the empty pleasures in which he had wasted his youth.

The old Indian had received him kindly, and shown him much favour. He was flattered by the baronet's attentions, and liked his company. From that quarter he had every encouragement. Lily, too, was always glad to see him, and often expressed her gratitude for all his kindness. But it was only gratitude. Sir William saw that she was still thinking of Edgar, although the idol had revealed its worthless clay, and the scales had fallen from her too trusting eyes.

Constant, who was aware of Sir William's passion, and favoured it, wrote to the baronet and informed him of the discovery of Edgar. Sir William immediately called at the hotel and

learned all particulars. The letter did not surprise him, but he was infinitely relieved to find that Lily's eyes were at last opened, and that she had escaped the danger which he so much dreaded. So pure and disinterested was his love for the girl, that for the moment he had no thought of himself. And so scrupulous was his sense of honour, that he drew a cheque for two hundred pounds, and insisted upon Constant sending it to the scapegrace in fulfilment of the promise that had been implied, if not actually made, by the overtures of Franz Stimmler.

"The scamp does not deserve it," said Constant.

"Perhaps not," said the baronet; "but that is no reason that we should be less than gentlemen. Get the cheque cashed at the bank, and give him the money in your own name."

The money was duly conveyed to Edgar, and the first thing he did on getting out of the spunging-house, was to array himself in a dandified suit of clothes and call at Pomeroy's Hotel. Constant met him in the hall. The sultan was as high and mighty, as haughty and insolent as ever. He leaped from his cab and swaggered into the hotel with the confident air of an invading Caesar. His manner said as plainly as any words, "I have come, and when I have seen I shall conquer."

"You may depend upon me, my good fellow," he said to Constant, with a patronising air. "Your trouble shall be well rewarded; but between you and me and the post," he added, tapping Constant on the shoulder with his cane, "I begin to suspect that the little party sent you, eh?"

Constant could scarcely keep his temper.

"You had better see the lady yourself," he said. "I will send up your card. No doubt Miss Blunt will be glad to see you."

Greyfaunt started at the name.

"Blunt!" he said; "is that her name?"

"I should have thought," said Constant "you would be acquainted with the name of a lady who is so devoted to you."

"Well," said Greyfaunt, "her mother called herself Madame Ernestine; but then these circus women take all sorts of absurd names. I only knew the girl as Lily. Surely her father was not that dirty, drunken Griffin Blunt, who put an end to his miserable existence in the Seine?"

"Miss Blunt's father was a gentleman, sir," said Constant, glaring at him angrily. "But here is Miss Blunt's answer."

The servant who had taken up Greyfaunt's card here returned and presented him with a letter.

"I am instructed," he said, "to return this to you, and to say that Miss Blunt has read it."

Greyfaunt was completely taken aback. He saw at a glance that it was his own letter, the letter he had addressed to Constant. He opened it hurriedly to make sure, and his eye fell upon his own words, "If you serve me in this, you shall have no reason to complain of your share of the plunder."

"Why, what does this mean?" Edgar stammered out.

"It means, sir," said Constant, "that the lady is now aware of your true character, and has nothing more to say to you."

"And you did this?" said Greyfaunt, with an assumed air of indignation.

"Yes, I did it," Constant replied, deliberately, "and from the bottom of my soul I rejoice to think that I have saved this innocent young lady from the toils of a worthless wretch."

"Insolent scoundrel!" he cried, "how dare you insult a gentleman?" And in the heat and passion of the moment he struck at Constant with his cane.

The hotel-keeper avoided the blow, and with great coolness walked up to the dandy, wrenched his cane from him, and broke it across his knee. "Turn that man out of the hotel," Constant said, in a tone of command to his servants.

Two stalwart fellows in livery immediately stepped forward, and, seizing Greyfaunt by the collar, hurried him down the steps, and thrust him into the street, Constant throwing his broken cane after him.

It is possible that the crestfallen sultan, as he slunk out of Great Grand-street that day, recalled a similar scene in Paris in which he had some share. Poor Griffin Blunt was avenged.

Lily's first feeling, when she perused the damnable letter addressed to Constant, was one of bitter grief. But when she began to reflect, and to examine her heart, the feeling became one of shame. She had deceived herself; and in her blind selfishness had been ungrateful to one who loved her tenderly and truly. When she went back to the retrospect of that Greenwich dinner, and remembered how she carried away with her the image of the tall handsome gentleman who was so good and kind, who took her on his knee and petted her fondly, who kissed her so tenderly and gently at parting—when she remembered that it was this image which she carried away with her to Paris, that it was this image that she clung to and loved, and that Edgar was merely a new presence of outward beauty which she had induced with all the generous qualities of the tall handsome form that was fading from her memory—she hid her face in her hands, and sobbed for very shame. The god of her idolatry was Sir William Long; and all this time she had worshipped a mere joss, which her fancy had invested with his attributes.

Sir William sought no interview with Lily until after the first shock of her disenchantment had passed away. He called every day, however, to make kind inquiries, and always left a card, which Constant never failed to send up to Lily's room.

At first Lily was relieved to find that he did not ask to see her. She was afraid that he would despise her. She at least felt that she was not worthy of any other regard. She reproached herself bitterly, and often sat for hours in her own room, rocking herself to and

fro, beating her throbbing brow with her little hands, and crying pitifully.

"How can I ever look in that good, generous, face again? What will he think of me?"

But as days passed on and Sir William still continued to call and leave a card without asking to see her, Lily began to feel uneasy. Did he despise her? and were these merely calls of formal courtesy? Her heart took alarm, and she found herself anxiously asking why he did not come. Every afternoon, about the time he was accustomed to call and leave his card, she found herself standing behind the curtains of her uncle's grand sitting-room, peeping out into the street to watch for his brougham. Many broughams and carriages drove up to the door of Pomeroy's in the course of an afternoon, and Lily had no means of recognising Sir William's carriage unless she saw Sir William himself. One day a brougham stopped, and Constant approached the door, and stood talking for a few minutes with its unseen occupant. At the close of the colloquy, Lily observed a card given out to the hotel-keeper by a long thin white hand. It was his hand! Could she ever forget it! The hand which had fondled and patted her at Greenwich—the hand upon which she had noticed the great signet ring engraved with the little bird, whose motto was "Hope and Fortune."

Fortune had come, and she valued it not a straw. The grandeur by which she was surrounded chilled and terrified her; the jewels which her uncle had given her were weary chains binding her to a blank and soulless life. The hope at her breast, the hope of love and peace, had yet to be fulfilled.

"Oh, why does he not come? why does he not come?"

The very next day the brougham drove up to the door, and from her love's watch-tower behind the silken curtain, Lily saw Sir William get out and enter the hotel. Almost the next instant the servant announced him.

Lily's heart was fluttering in her breast like a scared bird in a cage. The room swam before her eyes, and she was about to fall, when her hands were gently seized and tenderly imprisoned between two others. She heard her name mentioned, and, lifting up her eyes from the ground, she saw, looking down upon her, the calm, earnest, loving face which had first won her child's heart, the bright vision of which had so long sustained and cheered her in the time of her misery and solitude.

"Tell me, Lily," said Sir William, almost doubtfully, "am I welcome? Are you glad to see me?"

Lily could not reply. Her eyes fell, her head dropped upon her bosom, and she sank upon a couch.

Sir William sat down beside her, and begged for an answer.

"Lily, Lily," he said, "I have loved you with the same love ever since you were a little child at Greenwich. Have you forgotten it?"

Poor Lily! It only pained her the more that he should think she had forgotten that bright day. She felt in her conscience that she had given him reason to think so.

"Forgotten it!" she said. "Oh no, no, no."

"Do you remember it well?" said the baronet.

"As if it were yesterday," Lily replied.

"Do you remember," he continued, "do you remember asking me if I were good? I was not good then; but I became a better man from that day. You asked me if I ever went to church? I confessed to you that I never went to church. But I went to church on the following Sunday, and on many Sundays after that. Do you remember the apple, and throwing the peel over my left shoulder when it fell upon the carpet in the shape of the letter W? You clapped your hands and said, 'How nice!' and asked me to be your sweetheart; but you were a child then. You don't remember it as I do."

Quite unconsciously, Sir William was cutting poor Lily to the very quick. She remembered all these things, and had thought of them often and often, clinging to them with a longing, loving heart, until the day that Edgar appeared. Then she began to forget. But he had cherished all these things to this day.

"Oh, Sir William," she cried, "you make me feel that I have been very ungrateful, very foolish, very wicked."

"Lily!" he exclaimed; "what have I said to pain you?"

"Nothing," she said. "It is not you who have given me pain; I have made the scourge for myself. I know the deep debt of gratitude I owe you——"

"Still that cold word, Lily," he said, pitifully.

She hung her head and sobbed.

"Sir William," she continued through her tears, "I ought to throw myself at your feet and beg your forgiveness on my knees; you, who have been so good, so kind, so trusting: while I—but I cannot speak what is at my heart. Leave me now; I am not worthy of you; let me write to you and explain all, and then, if you can forgive me——"

Her tears choked her utterance. She rose suddenly, gave him her hand, and rushed from the room, sobbing bitterly.

Sir William left the hotel with a sad heart, sorely troubled and perplexed. He could only guess at the cause of Lily's distress. He discerned that she reproached herself for something—for having loved the worthless Edgar, perhaps. Or possibly she might have discovered that he, Sir William, was her mother's unknown benefactor at Ranelagh, and was pained that she could not requite that kindness with love. And then he thought of his age. He was forty. He had spent the best of his days. And Lily? Lily was just budding into womanhood. As yet, before her the world lay all fresh and new, with joys and pleasures yet to be tasted. Why should he seek to link her young life with his. And yet the disparity was not so great

after all. Marriages between forty and twenty were common enough, and, when made for love, there was no reason why they should not be as happy as any other, nay, happier, for the love of a man of forty is no fickle fancy, no boy's caprice. As for Sir William, he knew that he could love Lily with an abounding affection, that he could cherish her, and dote upon her to the last; ay, that he could worship her as a holy being, and bow to her as to a guardian angel.

He waited anxiously for the letter. It came the next day, and it ran thus:

"My dear, good, kind Friend,—I scarcely know what to say to you now that I have sat down to write the letter which I promised. I feel, keenly and deeply, how unworthy I am, how ungrateful I must have appeared to you; but I fear I shall not have words to tell you what my heart reveals to me, now that I have awakened from that delusive dream.

"What I wish to say is, that I have never ceased to love you from that day at Greenwich, which I so well remember. Yes, it was *you* I loved. I know it now; but how—how can I tell you? I carried your image away with me to the school in Paris to which I was taken by my mother. I carried away with me not only a vision of your face, but the sound of your kind voice, the pressure of your gentle hand upon my hair, the soft touch of your lips upon my brow. I was a solitary girl at school. I had no friends or relations who came to see me. I never went home for holidays like the other girls. Often for days and nights together I was Quite Alone—alone with your face, with your smile, with your touch, with your kiss. When I wished to bring your image before me, I closed my eyes and saw you, like a light in the dark. You were the embodiment to me of all that was handsome, and beautiful, and good.

"I hung my arms about the neck of the vision which I conjured up. I was a child, a lonely child, without father or mother, or any one to love. In you I loved father, mother, sister, brother, and everything that is good and lovable. I prayed that I might see you again; but weary months and weary years passed, and hope was becoming dead within me. I had seen nothing but misery, misery, misery; and it seemed as if I were doomed to be miserable to the end. My spirit sank. I began to forget myself—to forget *you*. I did not forget your goodness, for that was always about me, like an essence, filling my heart with boundless love. But the outward sign was fading. When I closed my eyes now the vision seemed faint and undefined. It was so long, long ago! I was forgetting your form and features. And yet my heart was clinging to its first love—to *you*. But I was a heathen, and sought some visible sign in which to embody the attributes of my deity. Edgar Greyfaunt appeared, and he became my idol—the graven image which represented all I loved and adored.

Out of the forlorn state of my vacant heart I conceived this illusion, and set up in that yearning empty place the vague thing I loved. I know now that it was not Edgar.

"But I blush to think how long I remained blind—how long I continued to give you pain, when you were so good, so noble, so patient. I feel to want to go down on my knees to you, to ask you to forget my folly, and to treat me as a poor, weak, silly child. Come what will, I will ever bless you, and think of you with love and gratitude.

"Yours ever,
"LILY."

Sir William read this letter with a choking sensation, and the tears standing in his eyes.

"Dear Lily!" he exclaimed; "she is reproaching herself for being little less than an angel. I will fly to her at once; but stay," he added, checking himself, "what have I done that I should be blessed with such love as hers?" He paused for a moment in thought, then looked up reverently and exclaimed, "Heaven is merciful to me indeed!"

Sir William hastened to the hotel, and, without waiting to be announced, strode up the stairs and entered the old Indian's reception-room. Lily was there alone. Before she could rise to receive him, the baronet ran to her, and seated himself on the couch beside her.

"Lily, dearest Lily," he said, "do you, will you love me? Will you take me by the hand, and give me a chance of heaven? Will you be my little wife; my good angel?"

Thinking of her, perhaps, as the child whom he had nursed and petted at Greenwich, he drew her towards him as he said this. Lily yielded to his embrace, dropped her head upon his shoulder, and whispered assurance of undying love.

THE END OF QUITE ALONE.

WATER.

ONCE, when out in an open boat in the strait which separates Puffin Island from Anglesea, with a short chopping sea threatening to swamp us every minute, and cross waves like liquid obelisks starting up in all directions, while the boatmen had to keep a sharp look-out to save our little bark from capsizing, my companion, a person of no mean attainments, after careful observation of the waves, and, as I supposed, appreciation of our danger, suddenly exclaimed, "What a singular form of matter Water is!"

Whether in consequence of the high-strung feelings of the moment, or through the justice of the remark itself, it fixed itself in my memory: and frequently, whether beholding the great sea or a full bucket fetched from the pump; whether gazing at a mighty river, with its wealthy burdens, ever flowing onward, or borne on a lake in whose limpid depths you see water-fowl diving and fishes glancing; or stretched in a bath from a mineral spring, which is hot when it issues from the earth; the idea ever

haunts me that I am in the presence of a wonderful creation under most remarkable conditions, and I say to myself, again and again, "What a singular form of matter Water is!"

Water is paradoxical and contradictory in its outward and apparent qualities. It is at once hard and soft, yielding and resisting. It gives way, when permitted to do so, with marvellous facility. The slightest and lightest substance dropped upon it is admitted to its embrace, in strict accordance and proportion to its deserts and its density. So small a substance as a grain of sand is allowed to find its natural place at the bottom. A hydrostatic or water-bed is the easiest of couches, so easy, in fact, that some invalids cannot bear its excessive pliancy and complete adaptation to the form of the sleeper. Hence the notion of Descartes and others, that to explain the phenomena of water, its ultimate particles must be oblong, smooth, and flexible, lying one upon another like eels in a tub.

But water of a given temperature, confined, is of astounding hardness; it is as good as incompressible at that temperature: for what is a reduction of from forty-four to forty-eight millionth parts of its volume under a pressure equal to that of the atmosphere? Many solid matters—wood for instance—can be squeezed into a much smaller than their original bulk; the packer's art has attained wonderful perfection in inclosing much in little space: but all the queen's horses and all the queen's men cannot put a quart of water into a pint bottle; the cleverest packer in London (which is saying a great deal) cannot economise the room of a table-spoonful. You could sooner drive a nail into a solid cube of steel, than you could drive one into a cube of water enclosed in a perfectly unyielding box. It is the unsqueezability of water which gives its enormous strength to the hydraulic press. The hardness of water may be felt by striking its surface smartly with the open hand; the quality is also known to unfortunate swimmers who, intending to pitch into the water headforemost, fall flat on their stomachs instead.

The fickleness of seas and sea-like lakes arises from the extreme impressionability of water to outward influences. But while so movable and docile that the slightest inclination of its bottom causes it to flow in that direction, and the slightest breath on its surface raises a ripple, which is magnified into mountain waves by the impulsive force of stronger winds, water expands and contracts, in varying temperatures, only in quite a moderate degree.

To appreciate fully the value of what is, we may sometimes imagine what might be instead. Thus, what a blessing it is to the human race, to the animate world, to all organised nature, that water is not as expansible as oil! Great heats would cause rivers to overflow, animals to be smitten with apoplexy, sap-vessels to burst, making every plant one wound, while seas in summer would inundate the coasts which had the misfortune to bound them. There is no abstract cause, no fundamental reason, why

water should not be as expansible as oil. Happily, it is not so. On the contrary, the slight variation of which it is susceptible, tends to our advantage and convenience.

Pure water is at its greatest density, or heaviest and most contracted, at four degrees, centigrade ($\frac{1}{10}$ avoid fractions), or at exactly thirty-nine degrees of Fahrenheit, that is at seven degrees above the freezing point; but if the temperature changes, either way, the water expands. From the maximum density up to the boiling point, the expansion amounts to four hundredth parts of its volume—a mere nothing. If it cool below its maximum density, it still expands up to the freezing point. Consequently, water which is near the point of freezing is lighter than water that is only just a trifle warmer. It therefore rises and floats on the surface, allowing the warmer stratum of water to sink. Rivers and lakes, therefore, freeze *from the top downward* (which would not happen were the density of water to continue to increase with increasing cold), and the fish and water-weeds remain uninjured. Were the case otherwise than it is—if our streams and pools froze from the bottom—in long-continued frosts they would become solid blocks of ice; aquatic plants and animals would perish; and even in cases of partial freezing, the thaw and the return to a normal state of things would be much more tardy than under existing circumstances. Water still further expands at its conversion into ice; but with that we have nothing to do. Ice is not water, and with water alone we are dealing at present.

The providential character of the above arrangement is brought out into still higher relief by the fact that, although easily heated, water is a bad conductor of heat: that is, it does not readily part with heat. In water kept constantly boiling, it is the ebullition from the bottom of the pot which causes our viands to cook so speedily. A leg of mutton, simply plunged into boiling water, and there left to take care of itself without the aid of the stoker, would take a long time even to get warm through. Rumford fixed a plate of ice at the bottom of a glass vessel, and then poured in cold water enough to cover it to the depth of a quarter of an inch, on the top of which he poured boiling water in considerable quantity. The calorific was so slowly transmitted from the boiling water to the ice, that, at the end of two hours, only half of it was melted. But if, instead of fixing the ice at the bottom, it is allowed to swim on the surface, it is rapidly melted by the successive transport of the molecules of hot water from the bottom of the vessel up to the top, where the ice is. This experiment shows us what consequences we should have to suffer were our rivers and lakes to freeze from the bottom, as just now supposed. In the temperate zones, the larger masses of water would become perennial glaciers which no summer heat could liquefy.

Air is said to be an invisible, water a visible fluid. But very clear water is visible to us only from the effects of its refraction and because we

look down upon its surface. Were we *in* it, like fish, it would be as invisible to our eyes as air is; although distant objects would be tinged with blue or green, as distant mountains are with purple; and the depths would present a tinted ground, just as the depths of the sky present a ground of blue.

Water is fluid, and also humid or moist. There is no need to take offence at the statement that water is wet; for Aristotle calls it a humid element. Mercury is fluid without being wet; and unmixed oil can hardly be called damp or moist.

Pure water is scentless, and theoretically tasteless; but is any water to be found which is absolutely without flavour, incapable of making any impression on the palate, except those of cold and heat? It would be difficult to find an utterly tasteless spring, so readily does water take to itself foreign elements, in lesser or greater quantity. The purest, that distilled from snow, is far from being agreeable or the healthiest beverage. Boerhaave states his conviction that nobody ever saw a drop of quite pure water. When water is sufficiently charged with foreign matters—gases, salts, or metallic compounds—to exert an appreciable action on the animal economy, it is called mineral water. In this sense, the sea is a mass of mineral water. Many mineral springs issue from the earth at diverse localities. Mineral rain, even, has fell; smelling offensively of bad eggs and brimstone, being condensed from the vapours of sulphureous springs.

There is also a striking contrast between the clearness of water and its weight, some of the heaviest waters being the clearest. To look down into the Lakes of Geneva or Lucerne at the ends of exit, or into the seas which skirt some of the rocky coasts of Scotland, or of the Mediterranean, you would say that it was only air a little more dense than usual and rendered fluid; while bathing or rowing, you almost seem to be suspended in space. Water ought, you think, to be as light as it is transparent. Opaqueness conveys the notion of weight, translucency of the opposite quality. Yet water, even the freshest and sweetest, is seriously heavy. To be convinced of the fact practically, fetch a few pailsful from the neighbouring well, or sustain the shock of a well-directed douche, or even submit yourself to the fall of a shower-bath. The waves of a rough sea are battering-rams which, by their mere weight, dash men down as if they were insects. The heaviness of water has, naturally and properly, caused it to be selected as the standard of weight in the Metrical System. A cubic centimetre of distilled water at the temperature of its greatest density, that is to say, at thirty-nine degrees Fahrenheit, gives the gramme, of which all other weights are either multiples or fractions. Reason tell us that water must be heavy indeed, to allow really heavy bodies to float upon it; but it *looks* light. Mud, certainly, does not look light, but looks heavier than it really is.

The specific gravity of water is represented

by unity, or one. It serves as the measure for determining that of other bodies, as that of air does for that of other gases. Owing to the contraction of cold, water is about one-sixtieth heavier in winter, than in summer. The specific gravity of water being one, that of gold is nineteen and a half nearly. How heavy gold is, no one can realise who has not had an opportunity of handling it in quantity—in bullion, coin, or plate.

Water is eight hundred and fifty times heavier than air. The height of a column of water which shall be equal in weight to that of a column of the atmosphere of the same diameter, might be ascertained by filling a long glass tube (say thirty-six feet long), closed at one end, with water, in a lake, and then setting it upright with its open end just immersed in the lake. The column of water inside the tube will be found to descend to a height of about thirty-three feet above the point of the tube's immersion in the lake, according to the state of the atmosphere, leaving a vacuum at the top of the tube. The precise height of the column would vary with the weather, exactly as the height of the mercury in the barometer varies, and would equally indicate coming changes. Its unwieldiness is the only reason why a water barometer, with its foot immersed in a marble basin, should not be an article of furniture in every mansion three stories high. Running upstairs to read its height on the scale, would be merely a pleasant exercise. This equilibrium between the atmospheric pressure and a column of water thirty-three feet high, is the reason why that elevation is the limit to which sucking pumps will raise water.

The claims of water to be considered an element were founded on the belief that it is diffused everywhere, and present in all places where there is matter; that there is not a body in all nature which will not yield water. Water is the medium in which a multitude of organised beings pass either the whole or a portion of their lives; it serves as drink indispensable for men and for animals who people the earth and the air; it produces fat or embonpoint, and is really nutritive, since it prolongs the existence of unhappy wretches who are deprived of every other aliment; it is one of the most requisite agents of vegetation; its presence, brought about artificially, makes the desert fertile, and triples the produce of cultivated lands. In water, are formed a number of mineral substances which man afterwards applies to his own purposes. Water is the most useful chemical agent in the majority of reactions and organic changes. Without water, few combinations of matter are possible, whence the old precept "*Corpora non agunt nisi sint soluta*," "undissolved bodies are inert and inactive." Without moisture, the seed could not germinate, nor the seedling sprout, nor the stem spread, nor the blossom open. Water cooks our food, and helps to digest it, and to distribute the nutritive results throughout our frame. In the absence of water, cleanliness, in its multifarious forms

and appliances, becomes next to impracticable; domestic economy is brought to a standstill; and the arts are compelled to make a sudden stop. The druggist can dispense no more medicines, and dissolution itself is impossible—not only of bodies after death, but of alkalis, salts, sugars, gums, whose intimate combinations with water obtained for it the title of universal solvent.

Hence arose the ancient dogma that Water is the elemental matter, or stamen, which suffices alone for the production of all things. Thales, Milesius, and others imagined that all things were made of water. Before the discovery of its real composition, it was seen that it could be resolved into vapour, and the vapour again condensed into water; and was naturally regarded as a simple principle common to a great number of composite bodies. The fact that water cannot be really decomposed by heat alone, was not then known; that is, it was not suspected that agents differing from heat were capable of decomposing water.

The range between freezing and boiling water has been divided by the French into one hundred degrees, whence the scale is called centigrade. Under certain peculiar circumstances, the range is extensible. The change from a liquid to a solid state, may be retarded by keeping the vessel which contains the water in perfect repose. Guy Lussac kept water, completely deprived of air, perfectly liquid down to—twelve degrees. But in this case, the slightest shock, the least agitation, suffices to make the whole mass congeal.

The boiling of water may also be delayed by dissolving in it any solid body less volatile than itself, such as common salt, when eleven degrees or twelve degrees higher of Fahrenheit are required to produce ebullition. This is why plunging fish into boiling salt and water renders it firmer, by suddenly coagulating the albumen. The greater heat so obtained, also cooks vegetables more thoroughly. The same hot liquid is also best for poaching eggs: they come out of their bath with smooth and clean, instead of ragged and untidy jackets.

Thus the limits between which water can exist, as water, are strikingly narrow and restricted—only one hundred degrees centigrade under ordinary circumstances. The human frame can bear a wider range of temperature than this delicate, unorganised, inanimate “element.” Colder than the freezing-point, water is ice; hotter than the boiling-point, water is steam. But not long since, the Comte Henri Russel, after encountering fifty degrees of cold in Asiatic Siberia—and mercury freezes at forty-eight degrees—had to bear fifty degrees of heat in Australia. When we remember that water evaporates rapidly at a temperature far below the boiling-point, we see at once what a transitory, fleeting, changeable thing it is. While we are looking at it, it is gone; before we can seize it, it slips through our fingers. Indeed, according to Boyle and others, water is a crystal melting at a low temperature, whose normal condition is that

of ice; in other words, water is an unnatural state of ice; whenever it is not, it ought to be ice. Heat dissolves ice into water, just as it dissolves butter into oil. Butter and ice, nevertheless, are the proper forms for those liquids to appear in.

But what a ruthless piece of philosophy is this, to solidify all our streams with a stroke of the pen! And how happy, how thankful ought we to be that we live neither in a world of steam nor a world of ice! Circumstances might render such a life possible, but it would require very extraordinary circumstances to render it tolerably comfortable.

Pure water is protoxide of hydrogen. It is hydrogen rusted, and that thoroughly and completely, as much as iron-rust is oxide of iron; only the rusting is done instantaneously instead of gradually. Here again we have two separate paradoxes in one. Firstly, hydrogen is the lightest form of matter known, except the ether—which we don't know. Two volumes of this lightest gas combined with one volume of oxygen, a gas only a trifle heavier than air, form a fluid whose weight we have just been wondering at. Secondly, oxygen is eminently the sustainer of combustion, the life and soul of fire; and hydrogen is the combustible which illuminates our cities, warms our apartments, cooks our food, and kills us by its ill-timed explosions. And yet these two together constitute the agent which we daily employ, on the smallest and the largest scale, to extinguish fire! Verily, there are more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of, in Shakespeare's days, in his philosophy.

When the scornful mother launched the taunt at her son, “That he never would set the Thames on fire,” and the lad muttered, candlestick in hand, “I'm blessed if I don't try!” he was more in the right than his prejudiced parent. The Thames may be set on fire—although not with a tallow-candle—and burn. It is a question, not of possibility, but of purse-strings. Water can be separated into its two constituent gases (which is an analytical proof of what it is made), and the hydrogen used for lighting purposes. An experimental apparatus has been worked at the Invalides, Paris, and is working still; but the problem of producing gas from water, at a marketable price, yet remains unsolved. The process and its attendant essays, are not open to public inspection; for voracious plagiarists and patentees would pounce upon cheap water-gas the moment it was invented.

An early suspicion of the true nature of water was entertained by Newton. The genius who deduced gravity from the fall of an apple, saw the way to a grand chemical discovery in the sparkling of a dewdrop. We know that the brilliancy of the diamond is caused by its strong refractive power, which is out of proportion to its density; we also know that diamond is carbon, combustible. Water also refracts the sunbeams to a degree exceeding that which corresponds to its density. A new or an artificial

gem, decomposing light with the power of a dewdrop, would be priceless to the jeweller. Newton hence surmised that water contained a combustible principle; which has since been proved by experiment.

The proportions, in weight, of oxygen and hydrogen required to form water, are eighty-nine parts and nine-tenths of the first, to eleven parts and one-tenth of the latter, to make in all one hundred parts, as may be demonstrated by synthesis, that is, by putting the two ingredients together. It may be effected by passing an electric spark through a bladder or other vessel containing the gases duly mixed. But very considerable quantities of gas are required to produce an appreciable quantity of water. Cavendish was the first to reveal the real nature of water, and to pursue the experiment with sufficient perseverance to obtain a few spoonfuls. Monge, Lavoisier, and Laplace, manufactured it in larger quantities. Whether much water is naturally thus formed now, may be doubted; but imagination is overwhelmed on attempting to conceive the discharges of electricity requisite to combine the gases which furnished the water existing on the earth as seas, rivers, clouds, and ice.

Spring, well, rain, river, pond, and ice or snow-water, are the ordinary condition in which that liquid is presented to us. They are not all potable, or at least not wholesome. Many springs are too laden with either carbonate of sulphate of lime; many pools with decomposing vegetable or animal matter; many wells are impregnated by the soil in which they are dug, the strata through which they pass, the materials of which they are built, or by unhealthy infiltrations which escape from sewerage. Water, for drinking, should contain a certain quantity of air in dissolution. Ice and snow-water have none, and are therefore unfit both for drinking and as a medium for fish to live in. The air, however, may be restored by agitation. Thus, trout are found in streams that spring from glaciers at no great distance from the source; because the water has been aerated by falling and being broken while leaping from rock to rock. It is curious that the air contained in water should hold more oxygen than atmospheric air; which explains why so small a quantity should serve for the respiration of fishes. The liquid appears to have the power of changing the composition of the atmosphere. The air which enters into water at its conversion into ice and separates by distillation, contains even a greater proportion of oxygen.

Easy tests of good drinking water are, that it readily dissolves soap without curdling, and that it cooks vegetables well, especially dry vegetables, as peas. Drinking water should be running, limpid, scentless, insipid (not flat), giving no sensation of weight when taken into the stomach, yielding but a slight precipitate to the nitrate of silver, the nitrate of barytes, and the oxalate of ammonia. Its temperature should not greatly differ from that of the atmosphere. The best is water which flows over a flinty

bed, and whose source is not in calcareous ground.

Water in casks from ponds and rivers is apt to acquire, after a time, a putrid and offensive smell, which renders it disgusting and even dangerous. An efficacious remedy is to mix with it a little coarsely-powdered, well-calcined charcoal, or, still better, charred bones, to stir well, and then strain or filter. When the quantity of charcoal is sufficient, the water is immediately disinfected. It results from Lowitz's further experiments that sulphuric acid greatly assists the action of the charcoal, and also allows the dose to be diminished by nearly two-thirds, which is a great advantage in long sea voyages. Three pounds four ounces of putrid water require four ounces and a half of powdered charcoal for their complete purification, whilst by adding thirty-four drops of sulphuric acid to the same quantity of water, an ounce and a half of charcoal suffices. The sulphuric acid need cause no apprehension, because the quantity is too small to produce any injurious effects, and it is, moreover, absorbed by the charcoal itself. A good precaution is to char the inside of the water-casks before filling them.

We have seen, that within the short range of one hundred degrees centigrade, water passes through three different states. It is first a solid, then a liquid, and lastly an elastic fluid. The first is generally known as ice, the latter as steam or vapour. Clouds, fogs, dew, rain, snow, hail, and hoar-frost, are only varieties of those states.

At a given temperature, and under the same atmospherical pressure, the evaporation of water is abundant in proportion to the surface exposed to the air. Advantage is taken of this circumstance to obtain solid salt from saline springs. The water is made to fall on fagots of brushwood disposed in strata under the shelter of sheds. The water, as it falls on the brushwood, is divided into very fine rain, which, by offering numberless points of contact with the air, is in great part evaporated. The evaporation of the saline solution is then completed by boiling it in caldrons.

Under whatever circumstances water is evaporated, the resulting vapours mingle with the atmosphere, which therefore always contains more or less water in the state of elastic fluid. The quantity is in proportion to the temperature, whatever be the density of the air. Thus, it is capable of holding much more vapour in summer than in winter; and during hard frosts, the transparent air is as dry as it can be without being desiccated by artificial means. But even then, it still contains a certain quantity of gaseous water.

The vapours in the atmosphere remain invisible as long as they do not exceed its capacity of saturation. But if it cools, a portion of the vapour becomes visible, since the capacity of a given bulk of air to hold vapour diminishes with the temperature. Cold squeezes the atmosphere, just as the hand squeezes a sponge. And according to the height where the contraction

takes place, according to the quantity of vapour concentrated, according to the resulting increase of its specific gravity, it is converted into cloud, fog, or rain.

Dew also depends on the cooling of the air, only however to a moderate degree, and during the night. The dew on plants is partly derived from the moisture which they have themselves exhaled. If a waterproof cloth is laid on a grass plot, it will receive much less dew than the grass does. Experiment also shows that dew contains salts and extractive matters which have been supplied by vegetable exhalation.

If, when atmospheric vapour is collected in clouds, the temperature drops below the freezing point, minute crystals of ice are formed which, adhering together, form flakes of snow. Hoar-frost is dew frozen as it forms. At very low temperatures, ice is dry, and may be reduced to an impalpable powder.

M. Monge thus explains the formation of hail, which is confined to temperate climates. Vapour is condensed into drops of water at a very considerable elevation in the air. These drops fall with the accelerated velocity impressed upon them by the laws of motion; and as their surface evaporates in direct proportion to that velocity, and at the expense of the heat they contain, their centre, cooled to zero, freezes. The hailstones, still falling, cool still further; and, passing through clouds, freeze the watery particles which there attach themselves to their surface, forming coats of greater or less thickness, and increasing their size, sometimes very considerably, as we occasionally experience to our cost. Towards the close of the summer of 1834, I saw the city of Padua unroofed by a hailstorm. On breaking a hailstone, these coats are quite perceptible, while the primitive nucleus sometimes affects a crystalline form.

The efficacy of mineral springs on the human economy, and especially the different effects of different springs, have scarcely been accounted for by chemical analysis. Courses of treatment by "the waters" are, therefore, in great measure empirical. Dr. Scutetten has lately suggested (at the Académie Impériale de Médecine) one cause of their activity. Mineral waters contain no free electricity; but numerous experiments have proved that they give unequivocal indications of electro-magnetism. Whilst river, spring, and lake waters are electro-magnetised positively, mineral waters are always negative, whether they be hot or cold. There is no exception to the rule. If mineral water in a porous vessel be plunged in ordinary water contained in a second vessel concentric with the first, a pile is obtained, and the galvanometer put in contact with the two poles, immediately betrays the passage of the current.

Another doctor, residing at Metz, proposes to substitute for mineral waters a much more attractive class of fluids. He has written a pamphlet to prove that a real natural mineral liquid, as active and even more charged with mineral principles than many justly-esteemed springs, and containing potash, soda, lime, mag-

nesia, iron, manganese, chlorides, sulphates, carbonates, phosphates, is furnished by—the juice of the grape in the form, which Noah bequeathed to us, of wine.

Without insisting on Pindar's opinion touching the aristocracy of water, there is room for a few words respecting its pharmaceutical virtues. Dr. Clibbard, of Rocheserviere, advises gargling with cold water as a new and simple remedy for angina of the throat. As to hydro-pathy in general, it suffices to allude to it. Patrocles, at the siege of Troy, washed his friend Euphrilus's wound with water, after drawing out the dart. It is in warfare especially that the extreme value of water is felt. On the field of battle, the grand active agents are powder and steel to kill, and water to save. If water could be had in sufficiency there, it might save almost as many wounded as powder and steel kill. Apart from the assuaging of burning thirst, its external application is most beneficial.

Sydenham used to say that he would give up medicine, if opium were taken from him; Gassicourt said that he would renounce army surgery, if he were forbidden the use of water. With six or eight thousand wounded to attend to, where could an adequate supply of balsams, balms, and essences be found? How often have the waters of the Rhine, the Elbe, and the Danube, worked wonders in curing wounded French soldiers! The great Lafrey, in a printed circular, advised his colleagues in the Grande Armée, of every rank, to abstain from alcoholic liquids in the dressing of gunshot wounds. In Egypt, he proved the great advantages of the surgical employment of water. The Nile alone enabled him to cure the most terrible wounds. Well might the ancients call it the river of abundance and health!

Hydrology is an inexhaustible subject. Water is useful when it rises—take only the phenomena of capillarity; useful when it falls to its horizontal position—witness its employment in levelling. It petrifies and preserves objects in a bed of stone. It eats away and deposits rocks. It hollows out and garnishes caves. Happily such waters do not convert the entrails of those who drink them (as was once believed) into concrete and plaster. Water works most of the changes on the surface of the globe, lowering hills, raising valleys, filling up estuaries, creating deltas at the mouths of rivers, undermining cliffs, and preparing even the bed of the sea for the use of living creatures at its first uprising. Water has been turned aside from its beneficial uses to aid in ordeals and torturing. In the clepsydra it measures time; in the ceaseless flow of rivers it figures eternity; while, in the tides, it is a type of periodicity and reciprocity.

So useful and well-known a thing as water necessarily lends itself to popular and figurative phraseology. When an argument won't hold water, it shows want of tact to press it too close. As we have fresh-water sailors, so the French have their "fresh-water doctors"—the one held in equal honour with the other—in-

capable of weathering medical storms. "Put a little water into your wine" is a quiet way of telling a man to govern his temper. "To make the water come into one's mouth" is said of other things besides eating and drinking. Deep waters run smooth. The stillest waters are not the most amusing. A bottle of holy water is the most uncomfortable prison in which you can confine an imp or demon. Fishing in troubled waters is practised politically as well as piscatorially. There are waters of youth, waters of life, strong waters, and waters of strife. To be always in hot water is a disagreeable predicament, which is often a man's own fault; on the other hand, wet blankets overcast the circles they frequent, with an unpleasant chill.

THE BONES OF THE BOURBONS.

"No man," says the Koran, "knows the spot on earth where his grave shall be made." The Bourbons thought they knew, but, like meaner folks, they were out in their reckoning, so far, at least, as related to their final place of sepulture. In vain they built themselves a mighty mausoleum. For eleven hundred years the abbey church consecrated to St. Denis held the bones of Capets, Carolingians, and the descendants of "the good king Dagobert," but the revolutionary storm of 1792 swept away all before it, and scattered these and all the other relics till then held sacred. There are few events of that terrible time more completely demonstrating the subversion of the royalty which had endured so long, than the decree of the Convention of the 6th of August, 1792, six months after the execution of Louis the Sixteenth, which sent the rabid populace of Paris trooping to St. Denis to obliterate the recollection of the kings of France by destroying their very tombs and burying their remains in the common fosse. A description of what St. Denis contained, and of the manner in which its treasures and its tombs were disposed of, may serve to convey some idea of this contrast.

A few words must first be given to the abbey church of St. Denis itself. Every one is familiar with the tradition which fixed its site, when, after decapitation on the banks of the Seine, the martyred saint walked with his head in his hands for two good leagues to choose his burial-place. The date of this occurrence is nearly as doubtful as the alleged miracle—one, by the by, which we meet with as having happened to other decollated saints in various parts of France—but most writers assign to it the year A.D. 250, or thereabouts, saying that a pious lady, named Catulla, recently converted to Christianity, built a chapel on the selected spot, where were inhumed, besides St. Denis, Rusticus and Eleutherius, two fellow-martyrs of the same persecution. It was a very humble edifice, but, two hundred years later, the chapel was augmented by the care of Saint Geneviève, and, receiving gradual additions, became, in the sixth century, an abbey of some pretensions. To the gratitude,

however, of Dagobert, who sought sanctuary there from the anger of his father, Clotaire, it owed its chief extension; for when that monarch came to the throne, he fulfilled a vow made in the days of his distress, by greatly embellishing the abbey church. The origin of this vow is thus recorded in verse, which, so late as the beginning of the seventeenth century, was still to be seen inscribed in Gothic characters on the second portal of the building:

Sanct-Denys, apostre de France,
Après avoir acquis à Dieu
Les François, par grande constance,
Apporta sa teste en ce lieu:
Catulle, femme de ce nom,
Le corps recut honestement,
Et le martyre de grand renom
Enseuillet dévotement.
Quand Dagobert, fils de Clotaire,
Fuyoit son indignation,
Il ne peut qu'en ce seul repaire,
Recourir consolation.
Entre nous donques qui passez
Soyez recors du temps iadis,
En saluant les saintes passez
De ce monde en Paradis.

In the work of extension Dagobert was greatly assisted by his minister, Eligius (better known as St. Eloi), the most skilful worker in precious metals of his time, and the bodies of the three martyrs were removed from the chapel of Catulla and reverently placed in three sarcophagi covered with fine gold, and adorned with jewels—enrichments which, however, were not allowed to remain till the period of the revolution, some money-wanting king having, in the mean time, replaced all this finery by shrines of simple silver. Having paid this respect to the patron saint of France, King Dagobert resolved that the abbey should be his own sepulchre, and accordingly left directions for the erection of a monument to his memory—which, having been destroyed by the invading Normans, was rebuilt by St. Louis, and still attests the skill of the artists of the thirteenth century. This tomb, which is of Portland stone, stands (or stood when we, ourselves, were last at St. Denis) on the left hand side on entering the church, in a recess under the four pillars which sustain one of the towers, and is in the shape of a Gothic chapel, much decorated, and covered with bas-reliefs, descriptive of a legend which is related as follows by Montfaucon, whom we translate: "A certain personage, named Ausvaldus, returning from an embassy into Sicily, landed on a small island, where lived an old anchorite, named John, whose sanctity drew many persons thither to be recommended in his prayers. Ausvaldus entered into conversation with this holy man, and, discoursing upon the Gauls and King Dagobert, John told him that, having been warned to pray to God for the soul of that prince, he saw on the sea a number of devils who held King Dagobert fast bound in a skiff, in which they were taking him, beating him all the while, to the infernal regions (aux manoirs de Vulcaïn); that Dagobert cried out, calling to his aid Saint Denis, Saint

Maurice, and Saint Martin, beseeching them to deliver him and carry him to Abraham's bosom. These saints, accordingly, rushed at the devils, tore from their claws the soul of Dagobert, and carried it to heaven with psalms and songs of praise." For the proper understanding of these bas-reliefs, it is necessary to begin at the bottom and follow the story upwards. First, then, is seen the effigy of King Dagobert lying at full length with his hands clasped on his breast, and above him this inscription: "Cy git Dagobert, Premier fondateur de Céans, vii^e Roi, en l'an vixxii, jusques a vixlv." In the next compartment, Dagobert is represented at the point of death, listening to the exhortations of Saint Denis. Then comes a tree, to mark, according to the old custom, that that which follows has no connexion with what preceded it. After the tree, appears a boat-load of devils ill treating the soul of poor Dagobert, and above is written: "Saint Denis reveals to John, the Anchorite, that the soul of Dagobert is in torment." In the central bas relief appear two angels, together with St. Denis and St. Martin, who come floating over the waves and depriving the devils of their prey, several of the demons taking headers into the sea, with this explanation: "The soul of Dagobert is delivered by the merits of Saint Denis, Saint Martin, and Saint Maurice." The third relief represents Saint Denis, Saint Martin, and Saint Maurice holding the soul of Dagobert in an upright position in a sheet, with an angel on each side, and two others in the background engaged in choral salutation. That there may be a proper distinction observed between soul and body, the figure of Dagobert appears of the neuter gender. At the very summit of the tomb, Saint Denis and Saint Martin are shown on their knees before Abraham, praying him to receive the ransomed soul into his bosom. On each side of the entire monument, as if supporting the ogive, are Queen Nantilda, the wife of Dagobert, and his son, Clovis the Second, who, like his father, was one of the benefactors of the abbey church; and his example was followed by Thierry the Third, Pepin-le-Bref, and Charlemagne. The latter, indeed, in the year 775, made magnificent additions. After the great king, all those of the third race, Hugh Capet and Saint Louis in particular, delighted in ornamenting the shrine of the apostle of the Gauls. The first building, of which mention has been made, bore the designation of Saint Denis de l'Estrée, and the concourse of pilgrims soon created a village round it, which village, in the reign of Louis-le-Jeune, grew into a town of tolerable size, so that, seeing the church did not suffice for the wants of the faithful, the celebrated Suger, twenty-sixth abbot from the foundation, resolved to build a larger on the same site, and for this purpose pulled down the additions made by Charlemagne, constructed the nave, finished the principal portal, began the two towers, and raised three lateral oratories, which were dedicated to Saint Romain, Saint Hippolyte, and Saint Nicolas,

the last of whom, the patron of thieves, sailors, and little children, always contrived to come in for a good share of what was going on in the shape of dedication. The work of Suger was completed by Saint Louis, who resolved that the place of sepulture of the kings of France, irregularly chosen up to his reign, should be irrevocably fixed at Saint Denis, and thus, of the present edifice, all that is above ground is the construction of the son of Blanche of Castile, while the crypt belongs to the first foundation. As a modern writer justly says, the abbey church of Saint Denis is one of the most beautiful specimens of the architecture of the thirteenth century now remaining in France. "It is a regular cruciform building, with double aisles and a circular east end. Its total length is three hundred and ninety feet; breadth, one hundred feet; and height of vaulting, eighty feet. Both the nave and choir, with the transepts, have a light triporium gallery and clerestory windows, with the curves of the arches curiously adapted to the vaulting. At the eastern end of the choir is a beautiful lady chapel, containing specimens of ancient and modern stained glass. Of the exterior of the church, the most remarkable features are the curious pinnacles that crown the buttresses of the aisles; the spire and pinnacles of the western tower, and the richly sculptured doorway of the northern transept.

It would be *lèse-majesté* to this noble structure to leave unnoticed the monuments by which it was once, and happily is again adorned; we shall, therefore, give a slight notice of the principal amongst them. There are three, belonging to the same period of art, which at once attract attention. These are the tombs of Louis the Twelfth and Anne of Brittany, of Francis the First and Claude of France, and of Henry the Second and Catherine de' Medici. On the same side with the monument to Dagobert, rises in white marble, the work of the famous Italian, Paolo Poncio, the memorial of "the Father of his country," and his beautiful Breton wife. The effigies of Louis the Twelfth and his queen are represented on a cenotaph surrounded by twelve arches, ornamented with charming arabesques, beneath which are placed statues of the twelve apostles, admirable for design, attitude, and execution. The whole rests upon a pedestal enriched with bas-reliefs, representing the battles fought in Italy in the reign of Louis, including that of Agnadel, and the king's entry into Milan. Above the cornice are kneeling statues of Louis and Anne. The whole is a splendid work of art, inferior only to the tomb raised by Anne herself to the memory of her father and mother, Francis the Second the last Duke of Brittany, and Marguerite de Foix, in the cathedral of Saint Pierre at Nantes. Close beside the monument to Louis and the duchess-queen is that of Henry the Second and the treacherous Catherine, whose effigies, in white marble, stretched on a couch, are from the designs of Philip Delorme, executed by Germain Pilon. The drapery of Catherine's dress is exquisitely wrought, and the likeness of the wily Italian is held to be more authentic

than many of her frequently painted portraits. The tomb itself is fourteen feet high by ten broad, and twelve and a half long: it is adorned with twelve composite columns of dark blue marble, and twelve white marble pilasters; at the angles are bronze figures representing the cardinal virtues, all of which were wanting to the characters of the originals. On the opposite side of the nave, more sumptuous, than either of the tombs just named, is that of Francis the First, and—in her lifetime—his neglected Queen Claude, who has bequeathed her name to the luscious green gage, of which tradition says, she was very fond, having nothing else to be fond of. Primaticcio designed, and Jean Goujon and other artists of note, sculptured the details of this glorious specimen of the Renaissance. The effigies of the royal dead repose upon a superb cenotaph, ornamented with a frieze representing the battles of Marignan and Croisilles, and above the cenotaph is reared a grand arch covered with arabesques and bas-reliefs; sixteen fluted Ionic columns support the entablature, above which in white marble, appear, in a kneeling attitude, the statues of Francis and Claude and their three children. As this description is not intended to answer the purpose of a guide-book, let us pass over the decorated memorial columns, bronze doors, and other ornamental work, to come to the royal vaults, where lie the empty coffins of the disinterred Bourbons, some of which, covered with violet-coloured velvet, and shining with gold or silver, rest upon iron bars. The crypt contains many monuments of the kings of the first and second races; the most remarkable of which are the marble sarcophagus in which Charlemagne was interred at Aix-la-Chapelle; a marble statue of that monarch; five statues in stone of Louis the First, Charles the Second, Louis the Second, Charles the Third, and Charles the Fourth; and cenotaphs (some of them with statues) of Charles Martel; Pepin le Bref and Queen Bertha; Carloman, son of Pepin; Louis and Carloman, sons of Louis le Bègue; and Eudes, Count of Paris. Next come the monuments of the Bourbon dynasty, consisting of cenotaphs, with one or two statues in stone or marble. The following is their order: Hugues Capet; Robert le Pieux, and Constance d'Arles, his queen; Constance of Castile, queen of Louis the Seventh; Henry the First; Louis the Sixth; Philip Augustus; Louis the Eighth. The chapel of St. Louis is very remarkable; it contains figures and busts which are painted and gilt; the busts are, St. Louis and Marguerite, his queen; and the statues, the Count de Nevers and Robert de Clermont, his two sons. The other more remarkable cenotaphs are those of Queen Blanche; Philippe le Hardi; Charles, King of Sicily, brother to St. Louis; Philippe le Bel; Louis the Tenth; Blanche, daughter of St. Louis; Philippe le Long; Charles le Bel; Jeanne de Navarre, daughter of Louis le Hutin; Charles d'Alençon, brother of Philippe the Sixth; Philippe the Sixth; Jean le Bon; Jeanne de Bourgogne, queen of Charles the

Sixth; Charles the Fifth; Marguerite, daughter of Philippe le Long; Charles the Sixth, and Isabeau de Bavière, his queen; and Charles the Seventh, their son. This list might be extended, but it is long enough already, and only given to show who the tenants were whom the mob of Paris so rudely disturbed. Yet one more worthy, perhaps the worthiest of all, must not be omitted—one of Froissart's most famous heroes—the Constable Du Guesclin, who lives again in marble, though his heart lies far away, buried in the church of St. Sauveur at Dinan in Brittany, whither it had been removed from the old church of the Jacobins in that town, long since destroyed. It was reserved for Jacobins of another kind to evince the respect *they* felt for the mighty warrior. Turenne, also, was among the illustrious dead, and a signet invented by the old Swiss who used to show the monuments, set forth that his remains were saved from cremation by order of Robespierre! He, who, in his lust for blood, spared neither sex nor age, was not very likely to be moved to sympathy for the great soldier of Louis the Fourteenth!

But a very imperfect idea of the contents of Saint Denis would be obtained were what was termed "le trésor de l'Abbaye" omitted from this enumeration. This "trésor" was composed of reliquaries, sacred vases, precious metals, and royal ornaments of the greatest value, and rich as other churches were in objects of the same description, Saint Denis passed for the richest in France. To say nothing of the relics of saints, which were of all sorts, enshrined in gold and silver, were to be seen:—the sceptre of Dagobert, of solid gold, enamelled, with an ornament at one extremity representing an eagle bearing a young man (probably the rape of Ganymede); the throne of gilt bronze of the same king (now in the Imperial Library in Paris), supposed to be the workmanship of Saint Eloi, modern imitations of which have been widely distributed; the crown of Charlemagne (which long served to crown the kings of France), his sceptre, adorned with a fleur-de-lys, his hand-of-justice, his sword and his spurs, all of gold, and enriched with precious stones; an enamelled brooch, set with jewels, which fastened the mantle of Saint Louis, and the hand-of-justice, on which he probably leant when he sat in judgment under the oak of Vincennes, as well as the sword he wore in the crusade to Damietta, where he died, and the ring he used as his seal, a magnificent sapphire, on which was engraved the head of the king, with the letters S. L. (Sigillum Ludovici); the agate chalice and serpentine patena of the celebrated Abbot Suger, to whom not only Saint Denis, but all France, was so deeply indebted; the crown of Queen Jeanne d'Evreux, the wife of Charles the Fourth, which, up to the time when the ceremony was discontinued (Marie de Medicis being the last so honoured), was used for the coronation of the French queens; the sword of the Maid of Orleans; the crowns and sceptres of Henry the Fourth, and of the four kings after him who bore the name of Louis; and, finally, that

famous banner, the Oriflamme of France, received (says tradition) by Clovis, as a gift from Heaven, and only unfurled when the King of France took the field in person, to the war-cry of "Montjoie et Saint Denis." The heavenly gift was borne for the last time during the war in Flanders, under Philip of Valois, and an old inventory of Saint Denis describes it as a standard of very thick silk (seudal) split up in the middle in the form of a gonfalon, very old, on a pole covered with copper gilt, and having a long and sharp iron point. What became of the greater part of these relics—for not all of them were melted down, or, for their intrinsic value, otherwise disposed of—need not be told.

Let us now come to the proceedings which, while they made an end of regal effigies and regal emblems, dispersed with every token of ignominy, the dust of the kings themselves. The Revolution produced many bad poets, but though their verse was, for the most part, execrable, it generally had a purpose, and the lines written by Lebrun, in 1792, may be considered as having suggested the act of desecration which furnishes the subject of this article. Lebrun, then, wrote as follows:

Purgeons le sol des patriotes,
Par des Rois encore infecté;
La terre de la liberté
Rejette les os des despotes.
De ces monstres divinisés
Que tous les cercueils soient brisés!
Que leur mémoire soit flétrie!
Et qu'avec leurs mânes errans,
Sortent du sein de la patrie
Les cadavres de ces tyrans!

And, in the following year, the Convention accomplished his desire, by their decree of August, 1793, when five days sufficed to rifle and demolish no fewer than fifty-one tombs, and violate the sanctity of more than a thousand years. In the tombs of hollowed stone of the earlier monarchs, very little worth notice was found. In that of King Pepin there was a small quantity of gold wire, nothing more, but each coffin bore the simple inscription of the name of its inmate on a leaden plate, and the greater part of these plates were much oxydised, and in a very bad condition, so that the names were, in many instances, nearly illegible. The plates, however, were not wanted for preservation, but, together with the leaden coffins of Philippe-le-Hardi and Isabella of Aragon, and the leaden roof of the abbey church, were taken to the Hôtel de Ville of Paris, and there melted down, and cast into musket-balls. The most remarkable object discovered was a silver seal, of ovate form, belonging to Constance of Castile, the second wife of Louis the Seventh, who died in 1160. It weighed three ounces and a half, and, silver money being out of fashion, was not converted into either cash or bullets, but found its way to the municipal stronghold, and was thence transferred to the cabinet of antiquities of the National (not the Imperial) Library. Though only three days' labour were actually bestowed, the work of demolition was, from various causes, suspended

from August till October, but on the twelfth of that month it was resumed, and with renewed vigour the destroyers forced their way into the vaults of the Bourbons.

The first coffin they met with, was one which might have demanded forbearance, had there been any forbearing spirit in the midst of so much unhallowed ruffianism; it was that of Henri Quatre! His body was in a good state of preservation, and his features were perfectly recognisable; the winding-sheet by which he was enveloped was also in good condition. For two days his remains were exposed to public view, and then they were remorselessly cast into the yawning trench which awaited them. The same fate awaited the bones of Louis the Thirteenth and his descendants. The first-named monarch was recognised by his moustaches, and Louis the Fourteenth by his prominent features; but his face, that face which had received so much adoration in his lifetime, was now black as ink. To this complexion had it come at last! The bodies of his immediate family, and especially that of the Grand Dauphin—oh, grandeur!—were in a state of liquid putrefaction. The hearts of some of the princes were found under the coffins, encased in lead with enamelled inscriptions; the lead was carefully taken away, the withered hearts were tossed with howls and execrations into the common fosse. On the fifth day, after having taken all the bodies, which were regularly interred in the royal vault, the depredators came, at the further end, to another coffin, placed on a stone bench about two feet from the ground, in a recess formed in the thickness of the wall. The situation of this coffin showed that it was that of the last king who had died, which always occupied the recess in question till his successor came to replace him. In this instance, the successor never came. As if open day were necessary for fully satisfying the vengeance of the revolutionary mob, eager to wreak their brutal fury on all the Bourbons in the person of the one, ill-called, "Le bien aimé," the coffin of Louis the Fifteenth was dragged from the crypt to the brink of the trench and there opened. The body taken out of its leaden case, and swathed like a mummy, appeared to be in good preservation; but the instant the bandages were removed the royal corpse took its revenge on the surrounding multitude. It was, as might have been expected, considering the disease of which the profligate king died, in a state of the direst putrefaction, and from the loathsome carcase came so pernicious an odour that all present fled from it in dismay. At length, in order that the Jacobin body-snatchers might complete their purpose, recourse was had to the firing of muskets, and burning of gunpowder to purify the air, and when the fumigation had lasted long enough, the blackened fragments of royalty were hurled into the pit on a bed of quick lime—somewhat different that from the sumptuous couch at Versailles!—and quickly concealed from human senses.

After the Bourbon vault had been emptied,

the resting-places of the kings of the House of Valois, who were buried in the several chapels of the abbey church, had their share of the general desecration. The first tomb opened was that of Charles the Fifth, the wisest and best of his race. Here, of the king himself, were found nothing but mouldering bones; but the emblems of his state had survived him undimmed in splendour—his enamelled gold crown, his silver hand-of-justice, and a golden sceptre five feet long, surmounted by acanthus-leaves of silver gilt, shining as bright as when first it was given to the dead monarch's grasp. In the coffin of Jeanne de Bourbon, his wife, many regal relics greeted the eye: part of her crown, a ring of gold, fragments of bracelets and small golden chains, a distaff of gilt wood, almost rotten, and long pointed shoes, half destroyed, embroidered in gold and silver. In the coffin of Charles the Seventh, a singular mode of embalming became apparent, the king's body being sprinkled all over with quicksilver, which had kept all its fluidity. This custom was also noticed in relation to other embalmed bodies of an earlier period. The bones of Louis the Eighth, surnamed the Lion, the father of St. Louis, who died on the 8th of November, 1226, at the age of forty, were nearly reduced to dust. On the stone which enclosed his coffin was sculptured a cross in low relief, and within was found only a decayed wooden sceptre and a diadem, or band of stuff of cloth-of-gold, with a species of satin cap, tolerably well preserved. He had been wrapped in a shroud of cloth-of-gold, beneath which was a dress of thick leather; and as his body was the only one thus encased, it is probable this mode of preservation was had recourse to that no unpleasant odour might issue from it in bringing his remains to St. Denis from Montpensier, in Auvergne, where he died, on his return from the war against the Albigenses. The coffin of St. Louis was shorter and narrower than most of the rest, and none of his mortal part was found within, his bones having been taken out when he was canonised. In the course of their search elsewhere, no part of the abbey church being left unexamined, the ruthless explorers came upon the tomb of Philippe le Bel, who died in 1314. His coffin was of stone lined with lead, and covered by a broad slab, traversed with thick iron bars. The skeleton was entire, and to one finger-bone still clung a gold ring: by his side was a copper-gilt sceptre five feet long, terminated by a tuft of foliage, on which rested a bird of the same metal.

Next came the demolition of the tomb of King Dagobert, which had been in the abbey church, which he founded, eleven hundred and fifty-five years. It was upwards of six feet long, and the

stone had been hollowed to receive the head, which was separated from the body, though, unlike the last of the kings of France, he had not closed his life decapitated. Within the tomb was found a coffer about two feet in length, lined throughout with lead, and containing the bones of "le bon Roi," and those of his wife, Nantilde. A silken envelope wrapped the remains of each, which were kept distinct by a dividing board. On one side of the coffer was a leaden tablet with this inscription: "Hic jacet corpus Dagoberti," and on the other a similar tablet bearing the words, "Hic jacet corpus Nantildis." The queen's skull could not be discovered, and it is probable it remained in the place of its first interment, Saint Louis having removed the bones of Dagobert and his wife to the new tomb which he provided for them. The exhumation of King John, the prisoner of Poitiers, was the last act of the spoliators of 1793.

It was all over now with Saint Denis, either as a place of sepulture or a place of worship; in its roofless condition it was used as a market-house, nor did it resume its ecclesiastical character for twelve years. Napoleon the first took an interest in its restoration, intending to make the sepulchral vaults of the Carlovingian line—for he recognised only the imperial house of Charlemagne—the mausoleum of the Bonaparte family. How that design was frustrated, every one knows. When the Bourbons came back, for the second time, in 1815, and had time to look about them—a privilege scarcely allowed them on their first return—Louis the Eighteenth began in earnest to restore the tombs of his ancestors and redecorate the time-honoured abbey church, which, after death, had been their asylum. He was the last Bourbon king buried there, and at his funeral all the old customs attendant on royal funerals were revived; but with these upholsterers' details the reader need not be troubled.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER XXXIV. FAUST AND MEPHISTOPHELES.

THAT day of the Manuel little party—and Violet had taken all its responsibilities on herself—seemed almost to trail by. Fermor was still fretting against what he thought the "unmeaningness" of the whole affair. Why, however, should they mind *him*? It was only to be expected that they would take their own course. No letters by post that morning. He had a good mind not to go at all, the thing was so absurd; but then if he got unwell and stayed away, he would be talked of, and asked about, and looked at, which would be yet more absurd. Above all, there would be a scene—tears and injured looks, and that kind of pressure.

Hanbury had gone away for a few days, but had come back express the night before. His passage—some hundred and twenty pounds' worth—had been taken and paid for out, and the splendid fast steamer had sailed out of Southampton a week before. Groaning chests, ranked under the title of "heavy luggage," had been put on board a sailing ship, and the sailing ship had weighed anchor and dropped down the Thames, so that was lost as well as the passage money. He "sold off" many things, furniture, dogs, horses—among others, the famous brute that had won the fatal race—hurriedly, and at a sacrifice. So here was further loss. Yet he did not care. He was beginning actually to live again, to breathe, to stretch his arms. He was seen to walk fast and excitedly, not to slouch along. His hopelessness was being mixed up with uncertainty—which was an improvement; just as a condemned prisoner is encouraged when he knows that powerful exertions are being made for a reprieve.

Major Carter, who had got letters that morning, met him in the little street. Hanbury was full of importance. The major turned back with him.

"A great day for Eastport," said the major, cheerily. "We are all so interested in our friend's little adventure. Quod faustum, &c., you know the quotation"—which Hanbury did not. "They are charming girls—what I call a sweetness about them."

Hanbury turned on him eyes that almost swam. "Indeed they are," he said; and out

of gratitude he could not but add: "and I know, I am sure, they like you."

"I dare say Miss Violet does," said the other, "I don't think Miss Pauline quite so much. She, Miss Violet, is so soft and winning; like the flower she is called after, so retiring and delicate. Do you know, my dear Hanbury, I often get uneasy when I think of the rough east winds—you understand me?" Hanbury sighed heavily. "And that, I will confess to you," added the major, lightly touching the arm of his friend, "is the only thing that gives me a little uneasiness on her score—I mean, our friend Fermor, who, though he has a fine natural disposition, and is full of the best points, is scarcely suited—you understand. And now, do you know, it has occurred to me lately, that some such idea has lately come upon her gentle mind; and it has been remarked," added the major, with mystery, "by others, too."

Hanbury became irresolute. "Fermor," he said, "is indeed scarcely suited. I doubt if he understands her."

"He is really a fine character," said the major, warmly, "and is my friend. But I tell you candidly I never liked this match. He is for the world. She is for quiet domestic happiness. Poor sweet child! I can see she is even now turning back to old days. Another sort of nature would have suited her better. It is too late now to go back."

"Yes," said Hanbury, gloomily.

"But," said the major, "I am very glad of this opening, for I have wished to speak to you, and *you* are not a man to misunderstand frankness. It would not do—it would not answer—and would be scarcely fair——"

"How!" said Hanbury, colouring.

"I say I wish it could be undone, but it can't. No, it lies on you. You must discourage it as much as you can. She is young and impulsive, and cannot hide her feelings. But you must be generous, and make the sacrifice."

Clumsily disguised pleasure flashed in Hanbury's eyes. He could hardly contain himself. "You know," said he, confidentially, "I owe nothing to Fermor. He used me unfairly. It is an open game between us. Besides," he added, with pride, "if I could only save her——"

"Hush!" said the major, "this is all in confidence. I merely threw out the hint. Fermor would be in a fury if he knew it. I must go.

"Think no more of it, I beg. We shall meet at the little festival. . . . An revoir!"

Hanbury went his way with all his spirits, soul, heart, everything bounding and springing within him. He hurried tumultuously to the Mansuets. He found them in confusion. Violet and her confidential maid were out. She was almost, Hanbury found out, in a sort of light fever; for the crisis was now coming on. Her sister had noted even a little wildness. She was wrought up to the highest pitch, for she had given out, as it were by proclamation, that this night was to end the whole—to bring everything to a splendid issue. By this charm she had with difficulty laid that sleeping lion, her brother.

Hanbury, rousing about the little town, soon lighted on her. He came up to her shyly, yet exuberantly. She welcomed him according to her new tactics; led him about as her escort to many shops, and chattered all the while—all the while, too, looking eagerly round to the right and left for spectators. These she soon found. For Young Brett passed by, and looked after them, wondering; and Major Carter passed by, also wondering; before whom Hanbury drew himself up with pride. But Fermor, who was most desired, did not see that little progress.

He had paced his room a great deal that night. He was now feeling the monotony of desertion. He had no excitement to keep him up. "To be wasting in this place," he thought; "and a life like mine, by my own stupid folly, to be flung away." Rarely, indeed, in his life had Fermor made so honest a confession of incapacity.

It was coming to four o'clock, and darkening gradually. Post came about five. He had bade his man, Mr. Bates, be sure to go down before the time and fetch his letters. "Of course there will be no letters," he said, "because I want them. I suppose they think, now, I am not worth writing to."

By-and-by dropped in Young Brett, who, on the mention of Violet, or her "little party," told eagerly how he had just met her "with that fellow Hanbury." He remarked that that gentleman was plucking up wonderfully. He wondered what he (Hanbury) "was at" in "hanging about" in this way.

"I know," said Fermor, starting up and beginning to pace the room. "I understand it. It's no matter now, but it will come right in time."

Some little friendliness on Young Brett's part being repelled rather roughly, that youth went away scared. "We shall meet to-morrow," he said, as a farewell.

"Well!" said the other, "I suppose we shall. We meet now, and may meet to-morrow. There is no need of telling each other of such good news."

"No! no! of course," said poor Brett, colouring.

Later came Major Carter.

"I met your friend Hanbury in great spirits."

"I suppose," said Fermor, "in Miss Violet's company. What is the meaning of this?" he

added, violently. "Do they want to set me up for the whole town to laugh at? It is outrageous. People coming in here every minute telling me what they see. All Fermor's inquiries, came rushing on him. 'Do not tell me played on in this fashion. To be talked of by the low tea-table gossip of a low place like this. How dare they attempt to be playing these petty tricks on me! I tell you what, Carter; I have a good mind to give the whole tribe a lesson.'"

"No, no," said the major; "I acquit her—she is too much of a child, too quiet and harmless."

"Who mentioned her, pray," said Fermor becoming calm. "Did I? Then, pray don't say so. Too much of a child! There's a nice alliance for a man that might rise in the world. A man that at this moment might be high in India, and talked of. I declare, Carter, I could sit and cry when I think of all I have lost and been obliged to give up, and for such a set. You know what I am, and what is in me. Isn't it a cruel thing? And Sir Hopkins knows, yet I must say has behaved nobly; but what could he do? 'A child,' and 'perfectly harmless,' in India! And after all this, to dare to be playing their wretched little game upon me."

This was a tremendous burst for Fermor.

"I must say," said the major, calmly, "their proceedings are quite beyond me. It is a game, I tell you candidly. I have reason to know it."

"You have?" said Fermor, eagerly; "show it to me. Prove it."

The major shook his head. "I can only say," he said, "that I met that very Mr. Hanbury with, as you say, Miss Violet Manuel—and had a little talk with him previously."

"He was in spirits," said Fermor.

"How did you know that?" said the major astonished. "So he was. He threw out some hints. You know he is rather of an open nature. By the way, he seemed to hint at a sort of justification of himself, as he said you had used him very ill."

"I suppose so," said Fermor. "What is he aggrieved about? Good gracious, is not this a free country? Who forces her, or who is forcing? If they want him, let them take him, in God's name. Let her say so at once, and let them have done with these wretched tricks. I'm sick of them."

This was the irritation of, say, a month back, all burst forth at one moment. The major paused. "I am glad you have spoken to me so frankly," said he. "I should advise some decided course. A clear, final, and positive explanation. I shall come here again, late if you will allow me."

The major was gone, the darkness was coming on yet stronger. It was past five o'clock, and here now was his man, Bates, entering with the lamp, and the post. Absolutely a whole mail of letters for Captain Fermor. "And here, sir," added Bates, "is a letter as was just left by Miss Manuel's maid." The demeanour of Miss Manuel's maid, had she to make such

an announcement with a reference to Mr. Bates, would have been successful and awkward. But Mr. Bates was a soldier and unmoved. Fermor, however, gave preference to the regular mail.

One from Lady Laura. One from his army agent. Several from tailors, perfumers, besides circulars, and a large envelope directed in Sir Hopkins's well-known official hand. Nervously, though he expected nothing from it, Fermor drew his chair in and began to read. It was very closely written, and with a heart which beat quicker and quicker with every line, he read it through. Towards the end, he rose and took a short hurried march backward and forward, then read on; when he had finished, there was a strange look in his eyes.

He rang the bell. "Go for Major Carter at once," he said to Mr. Bates; "do not lose a moment."

He did not open Lady Laura's epistle, though it contained news that young Piper had, the night before, offered himself to Alicia Mary at Blickmore's Hotel; nor the mixed crowd of tailors' and other tradesmen's. He read his relative's letter over again.

The major came. He had had a letter too from the same writer, but he did not mention it. Another time he would have been all amazement, delight, and surprise. Now he took the letter, gravely, which Fermor put into his hand.

"Read it out," said Fermor.

He dropped into a chair, and the major, leaning his face over the lamp, read out the letter:

"Sunday Evening.

"My dear Charles,—I am starting, surrounded by boxes and packages, but must find a moment to write to you on a very important matter.

"I have just heard of the death of old Colin Mackenzie, who has been treasurer of my government for the last forty years. The place is in my gift, and must be worth at the very least fifteen hundred a year. As my first bit of patronage, I offer it to you.

"You must think of this seriously, and decide at once. The little office I spoke of before was not, I admit, sufficient to tempt a man of parts to change his life; but this is a different question. The position is very delicate, considering the way you are situated. You will do me the justice to say that I never, by persuasion or advice, have attempted to interfere with your plans of life; but, on this occasion, I must speak plainly. This is a really great opening; it may lead to all sorts of things; and, if I were in your place, I would not hesitate a second; but it is for you to decide.

"As for that family for whom you seem to have a sort of infatuation, you know my opinion. If I had time, I could tell you some little matters I have picked up here. As for the child herself, I would pity her, if I did not think she was a little too clever. My dear boy, these things occur every day. Young St. Rouser—Lord Nimmo's eldest—behaved badly, as it is called,

to Vamitanti's daughter, and there were tears and broken hearts; but she had accepted old Bob Major of the Blues. She had been gratifying herself all the while.

"Or again, why be in a hurry? If you cannot live without this soft innocent, why not put it off a year or so, until you look about you? The thing is common enough. She can do, I suppose, as other young ladies have done before, and her people have no right to be taking extra airs on themselves. My dear Charles, you are a man of sense, and I have no right to tell you to do this, or do that; but you must decide at once, as the post is for some one else, and the appointment must be made before I go out. I shall wait one day—twelve hours—at Paris, for your answer by telegraph. Direct to the Hôtel Mirabeau.

"Yours truly,

"HOPKINS POCOKE.

"P.S. The packet leaves Marseilles on Friday at noon. If you accept, you would have almost time to sail with me. Tuesday, London (arrange with War-office—sell your commission. You will find a note at my rooms for Sir Charles, one of my oldest friends); Wednesday, Paris; Thursday, Marseilles. You will find me at the Empereur."

Major Carter lifted his face from the lamp. There was a pause for a moment; then he said, "A kind, sensible letter. A judicious letter."

"But," said Fermor, "assuming that, what am I to do?"

"I should say you had no choice. It is all decided for you here," said the major, tapping the letter. "Good gracious, Fermor!" he continued, suddenly becoming warm, "what are you about? Are you going to let this chivalrous sort of indulgence for a set of adventurers—forgive me—who have treated you infamously—yes, infamously—wreck your whole life? I can't stand by and see it; I can not. Your friends must interfere, even at the risk of offending you."

"Yes, yes," said Fermor, hastily, "you are right. They have no title to expect anything from me."

"It is splendid, a magnificent opening," said the major; "what I always prophesied."

"Yes," said Fermor, absently, "they deserve nothing from me, nothing. The only thing is that poor girl."

"Poor girl!" said Carter, with a meaning look that conveyed volumes; "no matter. Besides, what does Sir Hopkins say? Could anything be more delicate, considerate. Is there any hurry?"

"To be sure. No—certainly," said Fermor, hastily.

"I tell you what," said Carter, slowly, "you should go without delay. This very night. The express passes at midnight."

Fermor started a little guiltily. Perhaps some such notion had been in his thoughts.

"Yes," said the other, quickly, "the best, the kindest, and most charitable course. I know what your own generous instincts would

suggest. But it is time that your friends, if they have any influence, should interfere, and act for you."

"But that poor Violet," said Fermor, moving about restlessly.

"It is of *her* we are thinking, are we not?" said the major. "Is it not best to spare her the agitation, the fuss, and all the rest of it? It is the best opportunity we could have. It is like a providence. They have their little party (a woman's mind is easily filled), and their music, and our friend—er—Mr. Hanbury."

"Ah, true!" said Fermor; "quite right. I did not think of that. I really begin to think it would be for the best."

"Now that is sensible, and manly, and, I must say, most considerate. If you would care for it, we could go together. I have business that will take me to town later, so it is only anticipating."

"O, thanks, thanks," said Fermor; "I should so like it." He had been rather shrinking from the gloomy journey by himself.

"Is it settled then? Yes? Very well, I shall be back in an hour," said Major Carter.

CHAPTER XXXV. VIOLET'S PARTY.

FERMOR, left to himself, was in a whirl of excitement. His heart actually beat as he thought of the daring move he was about to make. Still he shrank from it; it seemed *ungentlemanly*. Above all, he thought of Violet's anxious face, appealing piteously. The crust of the fashionable world had not yet so wholly covered up his heart. For a moment he thought there was "no hurry," and that the most generous course was the best. But as soon as he had taken this view, he began—what is not uncommon with uncertain minds—to see the merits of the opposite course. This was quixotic; they were provident adventurers looking after their interests, and, above all, there was that soft Violet skilfully furnishing herself with a useful reserve in case of his failure. And thus he swung round indignantly to the other view. Then, through the clouds, broke out the soft, appealing face of Violet, her "little ways," and before he had done with that vision the major returned. He found Fermor sitting in the chair by the lamp, just as he had left him. The major had on his travelling cap and cloak.

"All packed?" he said. "Not much time—half-past eight."

"I don't know *what* to do," said Fermor, impatiently. "It does seem so heartless, doesn't it? Poor, poor girl; when they tell her in the morning!"

"These feelings are most creditable," said the major, calmly. "I quite sympathise with them. But recollect what Sir Hopkins says, and what occurred to me, too. You only put off, not break off. My dear Fermor, take my word for it, they are well used to this sort of thing—that clever sister and that unlicked brother."

"By the way," said Fermor, starting, "there was a letter came from him; where is it?"

He looked for it and opened it. The major

saw Fermor's brow contracting as he read; but did not know, though he guessed, that it was to the old tune, of which that brother was so fond. It hoped imperiously that Fermor would consider the matter seriously, and make up his mind; that these delays were scarcely respectful to his sister, and to them all; that her health was suffering; that Young Manuel must be excused if, once for all, he required a definite settlement of the whole question that night. The whole key was imperious, and, to Fermor's mind, insolent. It was fatally *mal à propos*.

He tossed down the missive, and said, "My mind is made up. I shall go at once. The colonel is sure to give me leave."

At the moment Fermor flung down the letter, Violet was in her room dressing for the little festival. Her sister and the faithful maid were assisting. The faithful maid was on her knees, busy with the skirt. Both these assistants seemed to know that much depended on the work of this night. The maid having, indeed, foretold certain success, was calm and confident.

Violet was before the glass, flushed and excited. She had not a particle of vanity, but she dressed herself to-night as though she had been another being—say a sister. She was nervously vivacious, and talked with a little rambling. She came down at last, and, as she entered their little drawing-room, felt herself panting; for she knew she was now embarked fairly in the scheme she had undertaken, and that the time was at hand.

"You look charming," her sister said, going up to her; "so bright and sparkling, and in such spirits." The sister had said the same to the maid, and the maid had agreed with the sister.

"Do you think he will like me?" said Violet, in a little rapture. "O, you shall see to-night how he will behave—that is, if I have any power with him." And her face fell a little wearily, for her head was confused and her brain overcharged with little speeches and little tactics, which she had been planning all day.

"He cannot resist you, dearest," said her sister, kissing her. "He never can."

The little rooms had been laid out artistically with flowers and modest decorations. There was the foreign air and the foreign touch over all. There were only a few people to come after all. The fact was, as Fermor had put it, they knew but few, and nearly all those few had left Eastport. After many weary searches and beating up of districts, the entertainment was to resolve itself into such homely elements as the representative clergyman, the representative doctor, the representative solicitor, the representative stray young men and old maiden ladies of the place, shrubs never transplanted, and to whom a little feast of this sort was as water in sultry weather. It was now ten o'clock, and they—and Mr. Hanbury—came with provincial punctuality.

She was very nervous, and thought how she would begin, or what was the first of those

painfully planned operations. Her little head was miserably confused. But she had not time to think. For here was the representative clergyman with boundless wife and daughters; and after him the doctor; and, following, the choir of maiden ladies and debatable youths, scarcely boys, nor yet wholly men. Yet these latter were negotiable, and the two or three girls who leavened the community welcomed them cheerfully.

Major Carter and Captain Fermor would, as of course, come flashing in late. For such brilliants a dull background or setting was necessary. Yet already had a white-faced pendule (a gilt classical lady, sitting on a metallic sofa, with the dial between the legs of the sofa) given a smart "ting," meaning the half-hour. Young Brett, faithful as a terrier, had come, and was keeping close to Miss Manuel, with his faithful terrier eyes fixed on her face. Another officer or two, reluctantly asked by Fermor, gave "an air" to the party, as a master would give a touch to a drawing. Those gentlemen were looking round with the surprise and wonder of Europeans newly landed on an Indian island. They seemed to keep together, too, for protection against the natives. Miss Manuel flitting about, with Young Brett following, tried to break up this confederacy. They would not go away: yet remained under a sense of injury at having been trepanned into the situation. Still Pauline contrived to stir these elements of her little pot-au-feu. She finally broke up the crowd, and brought about temporary alliances between the newly-arrived Europeans and the daughters of the natives. She was at the piano, out of the room, in the room, and everywhere. When the dial between the sofa legs of the pendule gave out eleven "tings," Violet's face began to show some of the old lines of anxiety. As little processions entered the room, of ices, teas, and cakes, she started and looked to the door. The opening of her little campaign was being too long delayed. Her heart was growing sick, and she heard a military European say aloud, with the freedom of his tribe, "What the deuce can have become of Fermor?"

Below-stairs others had been wondering also, but for this reason; that Mr. Bates, who had readily promised his services with trays and other heavy objects, had appointed to be there at ten "sharp," as he put it. Ten sharp had long gone by; it was now more than eleven sharp. No Mr. Bates. Much troubled in mind by this desertion, and laying it to the account of death or accident, the faithful maid, Jane, "slipped on" her bonnet and shawl, and flitted away up to Brown's-terrace. When the door was opened, she asked for Captain Fermor. He had gone up to the barracks—taken his things, too—so had Mr. Bates. But a note had been left, which was to be sent up in the morning to Mrs. Manuel's. Here it was.

Wondering, much mystified, and not at all "seeing her way," for so clever a fairy god-mother, the maid went home. She could not get further than that Mr. Bates and Captain

Fermor had gone to their barracks for the better facilities of dressing.

By the time she reached home it was long past twelve o'clock. The brother, Louis, had been biting his lips; his heart was full of fury at this public slight, as it appeared to be. Certain of the elderly maidens had said to Pauline in a friendly endearing way, "How was it that Captain Fermor was not here, my dear?" Violet, in such distress that she had flung away all thought of acting, sat with her eyes fixed, worn and hopeless, on the door, and her figure drooped, her fine clothes hanging about her, Hanbury watching her with a puzzled interest. As the French pendule "tinged" half-past twelve, she started as if it were the bell for execution. Another bell rang at the hall, and she went hurriedly over to the window. It was the maid, and Violet saw the note in her hand. In great trepidation she almost ran out of the room.

At that moment the London express had halted for refreshment. Fermor and his friend Carter, wrapped in cloaks, were standing on the platform, under an illuminated clock.

The maid tripped up-stairs, bonnet and shawl on. Violet met her at the door.

"Give—give it to me," she said, wildly.

"Quite right, miss," said the maid, confidentially, "they will be here presently."

The door was wide open, and every one of the little company—the Europeans, natives, all—heard a slow, sad, agonising cry outside, and Young Brett ran out just in time to catch her in his arms. Many crowded out and saw the hapless child, with what seemed death in her face, and one arm outstretched, holding tightly the fatal sheet of paper.

In a moment they had all poured out on the little landing, with a curiosity which overbore all decent restraint. The girls crushed and rustled to see. "What is it? what was it? what is in the letter? has he broken it off? gone off, has he?" One, indeed, had artfully glanced at the open paper in that now rigid little hand. The story was, indeed, known, or as good as known, in a few seconds.

There lay the poor child in her flowers and finery, ghastly white, relaxed, and, as it seemed, dying, supported by Hanbury, who, bursting through the little crowd, had taken her from Young Brett. In a few moments more they carried her up, her little finery all torn into shreds as it was trod on by those who carried her, amidst the despairing faces of her own family. The crowd, transformed into a low crowd by the greed of curiosity, crept half way up the stairs, and listened. But Hanbury, coming down, bluntly and roughly and without ceremony, cleared them out of the house. Only the representative doctor, who had come as a guest, remained professionally.

However terrible such a crisis, shattering the brain even as a blow of a bludgeon does the skull—it seldom kills. Later on that night, or morning, she opened her eyes on the anxious faces gathered round her, shivered, shrieked again, subsided soon into low sighs and quiet

means. The representative doctor then stepped in, and brought such remedies as he could apply.

At that moment the express, a hundred and twenty miles away, was rolling into London. It was a cold morning. The colder grey was breaking. For the last hour, under the pleasant encouragement of the major, Fernor had ceased to look back, and was beginning to look forward to a gay and brilliant future. The little fibres whose parting had caused him a little pain, were joining again fast. They had even had some snatches of sleep.

"They have had a merry night of it," said the major, as they went to claim their luggage; "much more so than we poor travellers! Eh? And our friend Hanbury has *not* made good use of his time—eh?"

OPENINGS IN CEYLON.

It is perhaps to be feared that the gorgeous pictures of the scenery of the island of Ceylon, and the descriptions of its animate and inanimate life, which able writers have from time to time given to the world, may have, in some instances, so captivated the minds of the young and imaginative, as to induce them to seek their fortunes here without due consideration.

Lovely as the scenery of the island unquestionably is, and enjoyable as its climate may be in the mountain regions at certain seasons of the year, it must be remembered that every landscape has its shady as well as its sunny side. If these mountain regions have their bursts of golden sunshine, they have also their days and weeks of depressing gloom. If to travel through the forest glades be delightful in the fresh early morning, when the dew sparkles on the leaf and studs the spiders' web with diamonds, and when the air is vocal with choral symphonies, and the deer feeds by the lake-side, and the peacock displays his hundred-eyed plumage to the rising sun, and the red-beaked ring-necked parrots flash their green wings in the light as they wheel, screaming with ecstasy, through the air—there is also the sultry noontide, when panting nature's voice is hushed, and the leaf droops wearily from the stalk, and the birds and beasts seek the deepest recesses of the wood, and the sun glares mercilessly on the burning brain. If it be pleasant at eventide to ride up to the tents picturesquely pitched beside the ruined tank, and to find a table spread in the wilderness, and the comforts of civilised life in the remote jungle, and the subservient headman of the neighbouring hamlet bowing a welcome, while the coolies light their fires and prepare their evening meal—and to watch the broad moon rising over the smooth water, and to hear through the still air the elephant's trumpet, and the elk's bark, and the jackal's wild cry, and the wader's shrill scream—it must also be remembered that while the official of high standing can command the comforts and appliances which, for a few weeks at a time, make this kind of life enjoyable, the poor ill-qualified surveyor or road-maker who has to live in

the jungle for months together, would probably have to sleep under a few talipot-leaves after a very frugal meal and a very hard day's work.

It may be assumed that nine young men out of ten who leave England for Ceylon, imagine that if in five years they have not made their fortune, still they will have got so far on their way towards that consummation, that they will be in a position to visit their native land, spend a couple of years there in comfort, marry the girl they have left behind them (every boy who goes abroad does leave a girl behind him, and frequently to such purpose that he hears no more of her in six months), and so, after a few more years, leave Ceylon for good, and retire in the prime of life in affluence, if not a millionaire.

Now, there is a personage I know very well, close to me while I write, who came to Ceylon with just such thoughts in his head, nineteen years ago, and he has never been able to afford to leave the East since, though he has led a sober, steady, frugal life. He has seen others, it is true, do better, but he has also seen others do worse; those who speak as if things came by chance may say that he drew a blank, but are you sure, intending adventurer, that you will secure a prize? and are there really many prizes to secure?

I assume that in coming to Ceylon you have either some friends there or some prospect of obtaining employment, and I now ask, what are you going to do when you get there?

There are only three kinds of employment suitable for a European:—1. The civil or government service. 2. A mercantile or planting life. 3. The bar. Let us look at each in turn.

The Ceylon civil service is, in a sense, the governing body of the island. A man enters it as a writer; he advances step by step to be a magistrate, a district judge, a government agent, till, if he lives long enough and draws a prize, he becomes a member of council, perhaps colonial secretary, and by the remotest possibility—just as much as there is, my reader, of your becoming Archbishop of Canterbury if a clergyman, or Lord Chancellor if a lawyer, or Commander-in-Chief if a soldier, or Lord High Admiral if a sailor—he *may* become governor. As a writer he will at first draw two hundred pounds a year, as colonial secretary two thousand five hundred pounds a year. The salaries vary between these two sums. Should his health fail, he will be allowed to retire on a pension proportionate to his standing and services. If he travel on duty, he draws a travelling allowance, and that is almost the only allowance any one draws. All this may sound very pleasant, and unquestionably it is very pleasant for a young man to step, on the very threshold of his career, into an office of authority and responsibility, to be a magistrate at twenty-one with jurisdiction over some fifty thousand people, or to be the assistant agent at thirty of a district with a hundred and fifty thousand people, with roads to make, tanks to repair, resources to develop, grievances to redress. But then, as I said before, there is another side to the question.

Here is Young Sanguine just come out as a writer after passing a competitive examination in England. He has youth, energy, acquirements, and a light purse when he lands at Galle; and several of his sovereigns vanish before the hotel-keepers let him go, and the mail-coach drops him at the Royal Hotel, Colombo, the capital of Ceylon. He is attached to the colonial office, asked by a brother civilian to put up with him for the present, and kindly received by the members of the service generally. He likes his prospects; he feels himself a man, and a man in authority; he franks the covers of official letters, and signs the letters themselves sometimes; he tells one to go and he goeth, he says to another do this, and he doeth it. After a week or two he has to buy a horse and carriage, and engage and furnish a house; or else to "chum" with some friend, and share expenses; and he soon finds that this is an expensive proceeding. Sixteen pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence seems to him a good sum to draw on the thirtieth of the month, but it goes inordinately fast. Living is expensive; his head servant, or apoo, who comes with the most flaming certificates of character, has marked the griffin for his own; and the prices of chickens and eggs suddenly rise enormously in the market on his arrival. Being fond of figures, he is surprised to find, on making a calculation at the end of the month, that on an average he has been eating sixteen eggs, three large and two small fowls, and four pounds of beef, per diem: while the quantity of chillies, onions, turmeric, ginger, and other curry stuffs he has swallowed would be enough to fill a decent sized gunny bag or two. The quantity of liquor he has consumed is frightful. He has likewise consumed half a bag of sugar, and five pounds of tea, and coffee without end, and to his remonstrances his apoo replies that on the "thud of month master gib dinner two tree gen'man, making vey pine diu'r," and that on the fourteenth Mr. Fry stayed to breakfast, and that two planter gentlemen stayed three days in the house. All Sanguine does, is, to drop some tartar emetic into the decanter on his sideboard before going to office next morning. He is of course much concerned to hear in the afternoon that the "apoo" has been seized with "a gripe," and other choleraic symptoms, and has gone to his house, while the decanter is found to contain a reduced quantity of liquor. The apoo comes back next morning, looking very queer, and tells master "him been vey sick yes'rday."

To cut the matter short, Sanguine finds it rather difficult to make both ends meet; or, to use a Ceylonese expression, the origin of which I have never been able to learn, he finds it hard "to put up his days" on his salary; and unless he is very frugal, he will overstep its limits. Promotion is, however, to be the cure for this; and he begins to look eagerly at the Civil Service List, to calculate who are before and who are behind him, and to study the probabilities of a vacancy occurring. At last a vacancy does occur, and Sanguine is appointed to an acting magistracy

in the Kandian country on three hundred pounds a year. Sanguine is delighted; but his joy is somewhat marred when he finds that to convey his goods and chattels in bullock-carts to his new abode, will cost him about thirty pounds. For this he will receive no allowance, as he goes "on promotion." (Oh, the cost of these moves on promotion!) When he is settled in his new place of abode, he discovers that the price of living is very much greater than at head-quarters. All his supplies have to be conveyed in carts, except the bare necessities of life, and his servants' wages are very high. At the expiration of eighteen months, the man for whom he is acting returns to the station, and poor Sanguine has to pack up his traps and march back to Colombo, again paying all the expenses of his journey. The sale of his heavy baggage yields him just enough to pay his debts and find his way back, and, when he reaches head-quarters, he has scarcely a rupee to buy furniture with, and runs into debt for it inevitably. After a few months at head-quarters, Sanguine, with a good many of the happy dreams of boyhood dispelled, is appointed magistrate of a station in the extreme north of the island, and as this is a confirmed appointment, worth four hundred and fifty pounds a year, Sanguine's friends congratulate him heartily on his good fortune. That is to say, all his friends who are a step or two higher up the ladder. for in this life-and-death struggling and jolting and jockeying for preferment, every man looks on him as his deadly foe who goes a step before him, and will pull him down, neck and crop, if he only gets a chance. So, Sanguine takes his passage in the colonial steamer, the Pearl, which, rather unfortunately for him, is going "South about" the next trip, and he has to circumnavigate the greater part of the island, and pay for his board, &c., accordingly, while a direct voyage would have been preferable in every way. Nevertheless, he at length reaches his destination, finds the place cheaper than any other he has been at, and settles down with the view of paying off his little debt, which has swelled to a hundred pounds.

Time goes on for five or six months, when Sanguine discovers that he has lost his heart to Miss Sophia, the second daughter of the Commissioner of Stamps, an old gentleman with a large family; and as the young lady returns the compliment, and as papa and mamma have no objection, Sanguine finds himself a family man with a nice little boy and a sweet little girl, before three more years have passed over his head. Sanguine's little wife is all he can wish, and so are his children; and he has managed to get out of debt, and now hopes to save a little. But one day, when he is near the top of his class and looking for promotion, Sanguine finds that pain in the right side rather worse than usual, and next day it is no better, and his wife insists on his sending for Dr. Humphrey, and the doctor looks grave and whispers to Mrs. S., "Liver," and next day he brings Dr. Fernando with him, and then they talk together, and then Mrs. Sanguine is called, and the poor

little woman is told that a sea voyage is absolutely necessary to save her husband's life. And therefore there is money to borrow at ten per cent, and the passage to be paid for, and the children's sea clothing to be got ready, and poor Sanguine goes home on half-pay for eighteen months and then comes out again alone, because he cannot pay for his wife's passage and that of his three children (there are three now). So he spends four or five dreary years at some lonely place far from his loved ones, and at last, when his wife rejoins him, the grey hairs are sprinkled over his head, and furrows have been traced on her brow, and the children are away at school in England, and a heavy pull they are; and Sanguine asks himself sometimes why it is that his old school-fellow, Tom Hardy, who is in the Madras Civil Service, and who came out the same year that he did, should be drawing one thousand five hundred a year at Negepatam, not more than a few hours' sail distant on the Indian coast, while he, poor Sanguine, in the Ceylon Civil Service, and in a much more expensive country, should, for doing the same kind of work, be only receiving seven hundred. In course of time, when Sanguine's sons and daughters are grown up and his head is silver white, he is appointed Controllor-General, and draws one thousand five hundred a year. But he has saved nothing, for the education of his family has cost much. Were he to retire, his pension would be about five hundred a year, and he has still two daughters and a son unprovided for. If he die, there is no pension for his wife, and he pays a heavy premium on the insurance of his life. Meanwhile, his old friend Tom Hardy, late of the Madras Civil Service, has been living comfortably in England for the last ten years on a pension of one thousand a year, and the interest of his savings accumulated out of a princely income.

Is this too gloomy a picture? No doubt I might have drawn a brighter one; but it is not a false one. There are some who have avoided those fatal morgans, acting appointments, accepted with the hope that Fogie who went on leave will never come out again, and then Smith who is acting for him will be confirmed, and Jones will be confirmed in Smith's place, and Brown in Jones's, and Robinson in Brown's, and so on. Unfortunately, Fogie always *does* come out again, and remains out, in spite of the prognostications of his well-wishers, who one and all tell each other, and every one else, that it is the maddest thing that ever was heard of for him to come out at his time of life, for he will die within a twelvemonth, &c. &c. There are some, too, who are content to remain single, or who are sent to stations where they have no opportunity of becoming double, and who save enough to take them home for a year after six or seven years' service; when they spend every farthing they have saved, and probably have to run into debt to return. There are some who have even saved a few hundreds, but they are few. The most a man can reasonably hope for, under favourable circumstances, is, to live within his

means, educate his children, bring them out, settle them, assure his life for one thousand pounds in his wife's favour, and retire at fifty-seven or eight on six hundred pounds a year, leaving his children to fight their way on as he did. If he do this, he does much more than most of his companions. A day or two ago I looked into the Civil Service List, and found that on an average it took a man about seven years to rise to an appointment worth six hundred pounds a year. Of the men in receipt of eight hundred pounds a year confirmed, the youngest had been eleven years, and the oldest nineteen years, in the service. Of those drawing one thousand five hundred pounds a year, the senior had been forty-one years, and the youngest in standing, twenty-two years in office. I do not speak of one or two exceptional cases, where men have been sent out from England to take up at once some high appointment.

As to the scientific branches of the service, the departments of the Surveyor-General and the Civil Engineer, the emoluments are on a still less favourable scale, while the work is most trying to the constitution; it involves daily exposure to sun and rain, malaria, and fever, and, excepting the heads of each department, who draw one thousand two hundred pounds, the salaries range between seven hundred and fifty pounds and three hundred pounds. I could name professional engineers who, after eight years' residence in the island, are drawing only three hundred pounds a year fixed salary, and some house allowance—a salary such as a writer might look for after eighteen months' service. When I add that a family man has to pay some hundred and twenty pounds a year wages for servants, and that in the large towns his house-rent will be at least ninety pounds, I fear I have not drawn a very tempting picture.

I now proceed to say something regarding the opening that a coffee estate or a merchant's office affords. With capital, energy, and connexion, there are few places where a man cannot get on, and Ceylon is as good a field as any, and perhaps better than most.

If a young fellow come to Ceylon with the promise of employment on an estate—and without some such promise I would dissuade him from coming at all—he will probably be engaged at first as an assistant to an experienced superintendent, at a salary of one hundred pounds, one hundred and fifty pounds, or two hundred pounds, a year, with a furnished bungalow to live in, servants, and the use of a horse, all free. As his expenses will only be his meat, and drink, and clothes, this is a very fair commencement to make, and the danger of running into debt, which the young civilian at his outset incurs, the young planter escapes. At the end of a year or two, if he have established a character for energy and steadiness, and shown an aptitude for his pursuit, he will probably be placed in charge of an estate with, say, three hundred pounds a year, and the same advantages as to house, horses, and servants as before; perhaps with greater advantage in those respects.

If he continue to give satisfaction and prove himself a good planter, he may, after a while, be entrusted with the general supervision of two or three estates in his neighbourhood, and draw five hundred pounds, or six hundred pounds a year in actual salaries; and he may be consulted with regard to the quality of forest lands, and their adaptability for cultivation; and he may be looked up to in his district as a man of some weight. There is, perhaps, no sphere in which a man takes his position so completely by virtue of his intrinsic qualities, as in that of a planter. There are about five hundred of these men, or more, scattered throughout the central province, and they come from every class, and from every part of Great Britain, though Scotchmen are the most numerous. There are men among them from Cambridge and Oxford, and men from the plough, or the ranks of the army. There are men of known integrity, sobriety, and steadiness, and there are men who are just the opposite; but a man goes for what he *is*, and what he is *worth*, and not for what he has *been*, or pretends to *be*, and he soon finds his right place, or is placed in it. Let a dozen planters meet at a "rest-house," and before sitting down to dinner they will call upon one of their number to take the head of the table. The selection is made with regard to the recognised station of the individual as a planter and a man, and the man who has the greatest weight of character, not the most flourishing antecedents, takes the post of honour.

When our planter has attained the position I have mentioned, he will be able to lay by enough out of his earnings to invest in a small estate of his own. He may perhaps purchase a few hundred acres of forest which he has judiciously selected, and clear it, and cultivate it by degrees; perhaps he may borrow a little money to go on with it faster, and so in time he becomes a proprietor. Perhaps he gets a good offer for his little estate, which by virtue of his good management is a promising one, and he goes to a new district and opens estates for himself and others, and becomes the leading manager, and is in a position to revisit for a year or two his native land, and bring out a little wife, or a big wife, as the case may be.

This is a view of coffee planting in its favourable aspect. It assumes that my man has the qualities needed in a good planter. That he is willing to lead an isolated life, or at least a life from which the society of his countrywomen is excluded, for there are very few ladies in the coffee districts compared with the number of the opposite sex. He will, if sociable, see his neighbours, and be seen of them, for the hospitality of planters is proverbial, and periodically he has to visit Kandy, or some other inland town, to draw specie for the payment of his coolies, and there he will meet a dozen or more of his companions who have come on the same errand, and they will have a crack after dinner, on the district news, labour, coffee-bags, crops, the railway, the state of the roads, the last hit at the government by the Planters' Association, that letter of B. W. in the Observer, &c. &c. On

the estate the planter has enough to do; a walk or a ride of ten or twelve miles before eleven o'clock, will give him a hearty appetite for his late breakfast, after having been soaked by a dozen showers, and dried again by a dozen suns; in the evening a pipe by the fireside, and a chat with some friend who has ridden over, will while away the time. If of steady principle and right feeling, he may avoid those temptations which are incidental to the life he has to lead, and which many do not escape; he will generally find a place of worship and a preacher within ten or twelve miles of where he lives, if not every Sunday, at least once a month.

If, however, he have not energy and strength of character as well as of body—if he readily succumb to difficulty, and yield weakly to temptation, I warn him off; let him not hereafter come to me, enfeebled by dissipation, and say I told him to go to Ceylon. With the qualities I have named as requisite, there are, I may say, few men who do not in time get on, though I am far from saying that all will eventually become proprietors, or be able to marry—for to reach that consummation so devoutly to be wished, the expense of a voyage to England must be incurred, the matrimonial market in Ceylon being anything but overstocked; but most men may make themselves comfortable, and lay by something for a rainy day, if industrious and steady. On the other hand, many men who have come out with capital have invested it hastily and injudiciously in some unremunerative property, or have spent their time in peacocking in Colombo, or elephant shooting in Bintenne, and left the estate to take such care of itself as estates generally do under the circumstances, and the consequences are what might have been expected.

As to the merchant's office, integrity, energy, and rectitude, will stand much in a young man's favour. He will unquestionably prosper. His life will be spent in the larger towns, and in course of time he may be admitted into a share in his employer's firm.

Cocoa-nut planters may, perhaps, complain that I have said nothing about them. Well; if you like to put a cocoa-nut in the sand, and sit waiting for fifteen years or more until it produces a nut, Ceylon is the place for you.

And now for the bar. I may safely assert that, of all undertakings where the brain is the capital, this is the best. Litigation is the favourite amusement of the Cinghalese and Tamuls; and its being an expensive one does not deter them. In this little island there are no less than one hundred and seventy-three advocates and proctors, some of whom make as much as twelve or fifteen hundred a year. But let my friend John Briefless pause a moment; let him not at once run pell-mell, with wig on head and gown blowing after him, to Southampton and woo the breeze to bear him to the Spice Island. Much is needed to obtain a footing, and more to hold it. The educated young Ceylonese (I use the word in its widest sense, and intend it to embrace all the sons of

Ceylon) have a peculiar aptitude for law. Their minds have that turn which enables them to appear to advantage as pleaders. Many of them have much legal acumen and readiness of speech, and, what is more, they know the language of the people. Now, I know what Mr. Briefless is going to say. You are going to tell me, sir, that you took the highest prizes for Greek and Latin; that you know German, French, and Italian, and that you are a nob at languages. All very true, no doubt; but, I will be bound to say, that if you remain in Ceylon until you are a grandfather, you will never be able to sit down with a common villager and understand his speech. There are some of us who have passed two examinations in Cinghalese, and who may be able to carry on a conversation with an educated man in that language; but it is as different talking to and understanding one of these, and talking to and understanding the common people, as it would be for a Frenchman who could converse in English with yourself, to go to Cornwall or Yorkshire and talk to a clodhopper in the local dialect.

If you are able to tell your horsekeeper in the vernacular to take home your horse, feed him, and bring him back, and he does not misunderstand you and leave you to walk, you will do as much as I expect of you. You will therefore be obliged to employ an interpreter; and that will be a great drawback on your success, for either your private interpreter will, for and in consideration of "tip," communicate to the opposite party what has passed between you and your client, or your client will suspect he has, which, so far as your interests are concerned, will be quite as bad. Moreover, the Ceylonese proctors naturally prefer placing their cases in the hands of advocates who are their own countrymen, and often of their own kith and kin, so that your business must mainly be that which is entrusted to you by Europeans; and as their number is limited, a few barristers from England fill the field, and there is little or no room for more. There are open to the bar two district judgships, worth one thousand two hundred pounds a year each; but what are they among so many? There are also a few small appointments called deputy Queen's advocateships, worth some four hundred pounds a year, with one or two prizes; but these are open to Ceylon as well as to English lawyers, as, indeed, the two district judgships are; and they are hardly worth acceptance by a man who wishes to rise.

Hear the sum of the whole matter. If you cannot do better anywhere else—and I should call it "better" to do much less elsewhere—if you are willing to lead a single life for eight or ten years, and when married to part with your children at nine years of age, with the prospect of paying very much for them, and seeing very little more of them for the rest of your natural life; to be taken ill just when you are getting your head above water, and to have to send your wife to England, an invalid, at any time when you least expect it, and to see her

suffer many maladies while she is with you; then come to Ceylon and make the most of your position. Contentment is a plant that may be cultivated in any soil.

In the year 1854, when John Company was still king, and when Tanjore had a rajah, I crossed over to India from Ceylon, and visited the Madras Presidency. My principal object was to judge for myself which system of government was the better: that of Leadenhall-street or Downing-street. We of Ceylon, of course, stood up for Downing-street. They of India for Leadenhall. Many a fight had I on the subject, and at last I resolved to go and judge for myself how things went on the great continent.

I first made for the capital, Madras, and then, purchasing two ponies, a cart, and two yoke of oxen, started on my travels, moving along slowly by night, and taking such sleep as my jolting vehicle would allow of, mounting one of my steeds before dawn, and pushing on for the "Travellers' bungalow" ere the sun rose. At each principal station in my line of route I halted for a few days, made acquaintance with the collector, judge, and other officials, visited the courts, jails, &c., and made myself acquainted as well as I could with the state of things. There is not a more hospitable class in the world than the European residents in India. At every station, I formed acquaintances; at some, friendships. From all, I met with civility and kindness. A man would see me in church, and observe that I was a stranger. An hour after, he would send his bullock-carriage for me, with a note, asking me to come and stay with him. He would be ignorant of my name, and address me by some descriptive designation: say, "The gentleman at the Travellers' bungalow." I look back to some of the days thus spent at those stations as among the pleasantest of my life. Among other places, I visited Tanjore, and was immediately asked to stay with a gentleman resident there, whom I will call Mr. Post, and who lived a short distance outside the fort, which in those days was regarded as the domain of the rajah. A queer dirty old place was that fort—worth seeing, however, if one desired to form an idea of what an Indian town was, without European supervision. The rajah's palace was a five-storied building, dilapidated and squalid, and, like most Indian buildings, the *front* was behind and the back in *front*; that is, it faced inward, and one saw from the street only closed windows. Attached to the palace was a menagerie containing some half-starved tigers, cheetahs, and other animals. Several ill-kept elephants stood munching leaves, and all around spoke of neglect and *shiftlessness*. The rajah himself was almost a prisoner, his rides were circumscribed, his expenditure was under rigid control, the rest of his dominion was under British direction, and only within the walls of the fort had he the semblance of authority. He himself was like most Oriental princes, the victim of ill-directed passions, and the creature of his

creatures. Several stories were told me of his childish doings. Among others, the following:

In default of an heir to his "throne," it would devolve in name as well as in fact to the "Company." Hitherto he had been childless, and the prospect of remaining so was exceedingly galling to him. He determined to contract a fresh marriage, and although in the opinion of the Laird o' Cockpen, "wooing wi' favour was fashious to seek," the rajah resolved that he would consult his own taste and fancy in the selection of his next spouse. Eighteen suitable Mahratta damsels of his own caste were accordingly collected, and, on a given day, were presented for selection. After due consideration, the rajah fixed upon one, and said *she* should be his queen. But the seventeen rejected young ladies had been too well schooled in the part they were to play, to let the matter rest there. With one consent they lifted up their voices, and declared they had been disgraced, in a manner contrary to all the usages and customs of Oriental ladies, by having been submitted to the gaze of one of the opposite sex; that now no one would marry them, and therefore the rajah must take them one and all, and, if he did not, the whole seventeen would drown themselves, and their deaths would be at his door. In vain did the perplexed rajah try to temporise; they only became the more clamorous. Never was there such a hullabaloo. Indian ladies do not faint, but they have a hundred ways quite as effectual of carrying their point. At last the poor king, finding that there was no other way of escaping the dilemma, was obliged to give in and promise to marry the whole batch. Having once conceded, he resolved, or his creatures resolved, that there should be no pre-eminence given to any one wife over the rest in the marriage ceremonies—a very simple matter in theory, but one not so easy to carry into practice. One of the first questions was, how they were to avoid a show of favouritism in going to the temple, and the solution was this: A carriage must be built broad enough to hold all the eighteen young ladies in a row.

The carriage was accordingly built within the precincts of the royal palace, and it was completed to the rajah's satisfaction. The auspicious day and the lucky hour arrived, the musicians arranged themselves in their places, the ladies took their seats, and all was in readiness to proceed. Then, for the first time, it occurred to some astute individual that the carriage must pass through the palace gates, and any one could see, with half an eye, that the rajah's ancestors had never contemplated the possibility of one of their number taking eighteen brides to "church" in one carriage, and had, therefore, built gates far too narrow for the purpose. What was to be done? However, the difficulty solved itself, for the carriage broke down before it got to the gate, and there was an end of the brilliant contrivance. I have sometimes, in conversation, when talking of the rapid rise of the once United States,

and the possibility of their extending in numbers and influence to a dangerous degree, related this anecdote of the Tanjore rajah's wives, and ventured to predict that the occidental state carriage would either find the gateway too narrow, or break through in the back like its Oriental prototype.

During my stay at Tanjore I visited the monument of Swartz, the missionary and honoured friend of a former rajah. The marble depicts the king steeped in sorrow, standing by the bedside of the dying teacher; and the monument was erected at the cost of the monarch. I also inspected the principal temple in the fort, where a magnificent figure of a bull, hewn out of a solid mass of black granite—a stone not to be found within a circuit of many miles—suggests the question by what means, now unknown to us, the men of old transported masses which we of modern times could scarcely attempt to carry away with all our means and appliances. Another large mass of granite surmounts a lofty tower one hundred and seventy feet high, of the kind characteristic of all Hindu temples, and an inscription states that in order to place it where it now rests, an inclined plane was constructed *five miles* in length.

The most entertaining incident connected with my stay at Tanjore was, however, an evening visit which I paid, in company with Mr. Post and a young lady of his family, to the confidential friend and adviser of the rajah. To the latter I could not obtain access, owing to the absence of the resident; for, without his permission, no European can have that privilege; and though doubtless he—whom I had come to Tanjore to visit—would have sent the necessary permission, I had no time to wait for it.

Notice had been duly given of our intended visit to the minister, and due preparations had been made for our reception. At sunset we drove to the fort, in a carriage drawn by two swift-trotting bullocks: a very common mode of locomotion where roads are often heavy and unmetalled. Camels were standing or lying picketed without the gates, and the rampart walls were thronged with the rajah's liege subjects, who were sitting there, squatted after the manner of Orientals, talking over the gossip of the city. Many of them had small cages which contained larks, and it appeared that it was the "fancy" to possess a bird of this kind, and to listen to its singing. Dirty sentries of the rajah's brave army, dressed in the British uniform, stood at the entrance-gates, and from sewer and ditch odours strong and vile ascended on all sides. Pressing our handkerchiefs to our noses we proceeded to the dwelling of our host, and alighted at the entrance-hall: a low dark and dirty little room! The house appeared to be undergoing repair, for in this room were a heap of lime on one side, and a heap of sand on the other: on the summit of which was seated, on their haunches, a native band discoursing excruciating music. One fellow who performed on a most sonorous brass instrument, by way of

doing me special honour, took aim, as I entered, at the lowest button of my waistcoat, and thereupon "blew a blast so loud and shrill," that I nearly collapsed. Our respected host here met us, and after making his salaams in native fashion, next shook hands with us in English style, and then conducted us up one flight of steps after another until we reached the highest chamber in the house, which was therefore the room of honour. Orientals lay great stress upon the "upper seats," and before they become acquainted with European customs, think it the most outrageous thing in the world that a low-caste coachman should sit on the box while the master is down below in the carriage. When the ambassadors of the King of Kandy first visited the Governor of Ceylon in Colombo, they much objected to this arrangement, as well as to the closing of the carriage doors—in fact, they refused to allow them to be shut—because, they said, it looked as if they were prisoners.

On entering the reception-room, we found it lighted by several bell-shaped glass lamps with burners, and, to increase the illumination, a boy carried after us, as we made a tour of inspection, a sort of flambeau. His costume was simple in the extreme; he might have exchanged his whole wardrobe for a decent-sized pocket-handkerchief and been a gainer by the exchange. The walls were adorned with pictures of various kinds. There were two fine engravings of the Nawabs of the Carnatic and Mysore, a number of native portraits of rajahs past and present, Hindu Venuses, circus-riders, and pothouse daubs, intermingled with drawings of a sacred nature. On one table were an American clock and a wax doll; on another, some native ornaments. Two pianos, an old and a new one, stood on opposite sides of the room, and the minister's son struck up on the Indian dulcimer, a very sweet-sounding instrument, Rousseau's Dream, and several other familiar tunes, which he played very well.

We then induced the old gentleman to open a piano and play a few tunes. By special request he launched into God save the Queen, and there, in this capital of a kingdom in which the rajah's word was once law, did his minister accompany us whilst we sang the words:

Grant her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the Queen!

After a while he asked me to play and sing, and, to please him, I struck the chords of Du Du, and a few other songs. Meanwhile, two of his married daughters had entered the room. Etiquette demanded that we should take little or no notice of them, but Miss Post went and conversed with them. They were pleasing and amiable looking, with light complexions. It was a step somewhat in advance of the times for our host to permit them to be seen at all; none of the unmarried ladies of his household appeared. More Indian stringed instruments were now introduced, and a love song, or rhapsody, was sung by an intended

son-in-law of the minister, while some one else accompanied him on a violin.

At length the tune of Malbrook was struck up, whereupon I commenced the song, set to that tune, of L A W, Law, which tickled the old gentleman so much that he carried me off to the piano, sat down and played the air, and made me sing the song to his accompaniment.

The time was now drawing near when I must leave not only our host but the place of his abode, for my carriage and pair (of bullocks) had been ordered for my journey to the seacoast that night; but before we left, trays were brought in containing mangoes, plantains, and limes. The old gentleman then asked for our handkerchiefs, which he moistened with perfume; when my turn came, he not only perfumed it and waved it before me, but gravely dabbed my face with scent: which I am bound to suppose was intended as a very great compliment. He then dashed me all over with perfume, gave me limes enough to have drowned me in lemonade, threw a garland of flowers over my shoulders, and, as a climax, interwove his fingers in mine and conducted me down stairs. Sadly was my gravity as well as my gallantry put to the test; Miss Post being left behind, to her own devices. I looked round apologetically, but what else could I do than resign myself to my fate, and go to the carriage in this ludicrous way? To have refused or to have shown any distaste would have hurt the feelings of a very fine well-bred and respected old gentleman.

THE LEGEND OF ROSES.

"For als moche as a fayre Mayden was blamed with wrong and sclaudred, . . . for whiche cause sche was demed to the Deth, and to be brant in that place, to the whiche sche was ladde. And as the Fyre began to brenne aboute hire, sche made hire Preyeres to oure Lord, that als wisely as sche was not gilty of that Synne, that he wold help hire, and make it to be known to alle men, of his mercy-fulle Grace. And whan sche hadde thus seyd, sche entred into the Fyure: and anon was the Fyur quenched and oute: and the Bronddes that weren brennyng becomen rede Roseres; and the Bronddes that weren not kyndled, becomen white Roseres fulle of Rosess. And theise weren the first Roseres and Rosess, bothe white and rede, that evere ony Man saughe."—*Travels of Sir J. MAUNDEVILLE, Kt., 1322.*

* This space is cleared: around the murmuring crowd Stand, stricken with such awe that few aloud Dare speak the thought that springs in each man's breast,

So are his senses and his heart oppress
With the stern conflict that must ever be
When the law-givers issue a decree,
'Fore which the voice of Nature in man's heart
With strong resistance rises to take part
Against injustice, sanctioned though it be
By time, use, law, and high authority.

For there, upon the slowly kindling pile,
Whose sable smoke obscures the sunshine's smile,
There shall be bound amid the cruel flame,
To die, a death of torture and of shame,
A woman—nay, a child almost in years,
Whose passionate denials and whose tears

Can naught avail to save her, or to prove
Aught 'gainst the charge that says a guilty love
Has stained her, marked her as a thing to be
Doomed to slow death and endless infamy.

And now they lead her forth. Through all the throng
A tremor passes as she steps along,
Without a word, a tear, while in her eyes
A strong, deep, tranquil spirit calmly lies.

She knows the hour to plead with man is gone,
She knows that hope from earthly aid is down,
Life is behind, Eternity before,
And as she nears the dark tremendous door
Death holds the key to let her through, within
Her soul casts off all weakness, fear, and sin,
And these subdued, the tie that God has given,
Binding the denizens of earth and Heaven
In a communion man hath often riven,
But never God—that tie, that vital spark
Glow with transcendent radiance through the dark,
And light and glory shine where once was gloom,
Honour and life where a disgraceful tomb
But lately yawned.

Before the pile she stands.
To Heaven she lifts her soul, her eyes, her hands:
"Hear me, Creator, for to Thee is known
My every act, my every thought, Thine own
Divinest teaching from my early youth
Hath kept my footsteps in the path of truth.
Hear me, my Saviour, Thou, the Man of Woes,
Whose life from its beginning to its close
Was one long course of suffering for that men
Having conceived an error turned their ken
With desperate resolution from the truth,
Till savage grown and destitute of ruth,
They craved Thy blood, Thou holy one and just,
Trampling Thine honour in the common dust.

Hear me. Thou knowest that from this most foul,
Most loathed charge, revolts my inmost soul.
Hear me, O Saviour! hear me ere I die—
Not life I crave, but that from infamy
My innocent name be rescued—send a sign
To show this people I am truly Thine -
Thine unpolluted."

Then her head she bowed,
And while a shudder thrilled the gasping crowd,
Advanced, and 'mid the flames in silence stood.

The flames? the flames! behold what meets the
gaze,
Down like a stricken creature drops the blaze,
The scattered brands divide to left and right,
And the first Roses greet the people's sight,
Red from the kindled brands, from the unkindled
white!

NORWEGIAN ELK-HUNTING.

My Norwegian carriage, with all its paraphernalia, was carefully packed under the supervision of the indefatigable Mr. B., who has been styled the factotum of travelling Englishmen. I presume my reader knows what a carriage is; if not, the following short and graphic description of a friend of mine may possibly enlighten him: "A carriage is a vehicle, licensed to carry one in front, on two wheels and no springs; resembles a velocipede with a dash of the spider in it. On a board behind, rests the portmanteau, atop of which the 'skys-gut,' or postboy, perches, while the rods, guns, &c., are

strapped miscellaneously on the shafts, Ponto occupying a snug bed underneath in a sort of bag."

I had determined on investing in a carriage under the advice of an amiable gentleman residing at Christiansand, who, to add to his other sterling qualities, had been the introducer of sundry philanthropic improvements into that town, and was at the time taxing his abilities to the utmost to procure for the public a cheap and nutritious beverage in the shape of porter brewed without malt. He was very sanguine about it; but I have since heard that the scheme had failed, and that, after a vain attempt to transform it into vinegar, it was undergoing a process whereby it was expected it would eventually become blacking. Possibly, it might shine under that name at last.

If quick travelling have a tendency to produce insanity, verily the Norwegians ought to be the sanest of all civilised people. It took us three long hours doing the forty-two miles to Eidsvold by the Norwegian Trunk Railway—a memento of the late R. Stephenson's engineering skill. I had with me a letter of introduction to a Bønde (farmer) in Osterdal, who was to provide me with a guide and pony to the Swedish frontier, where report said bears, trout, reindeer, and elk, abounded in their respective elements. My host was a well-to-do man, and very hospitable. I must stay two days with him before setting out. He wanted me to pay a visit to his "sæter" and his pastor. In my simplicity, I thought a "sæter" had something to do with the clerical profession, but found it was a chalet on the mountains, where the cattle are sent during the summer. A bear had killed one of his cows the night before, and he intended lying out for it the next few nights. "Would I come with him?" I should rather think so. What lots of pomatum-pots of the "real article" I would take back as presents to my friends! So off we started.

It was a pretty sight to see the "sæter" girl (it wasn't she who was pretty) leading out her cows and goats to the pasture, and singing to them, and calling them by name. Sometimes she would run away from them, and then a hirc-bovine steeple-chase ensued as to which would catch her, and the winner was rewarded with a lump of salt. The bowls full of cream, and the cheeses, were enough to make a Londoner's mouth water. "I must taste them," said my host; and, without waiting for a reply, or even getting a knife, he stuck his finger into a soft cheese, and held it out to me to take a bit off the end of it.

It was now getting late, so, loading both barrels of my rifle, and also five of my revolver, I followed him to the place where the remains of the slaughtered cow lay. Old Bruin must have been hungry; for certainly he had eaten half of it.

Reader, have you ever gone out bear-hunting? I strongly advise you—"Don't!" unless you like lying flat on your stomach for a whole night, without moving (or being able to smoke), in the open air, with swarms of mosquitoes

eating you up. Of course I was not going to give in. If my friend had lain there till now, so would I; that is, supposing the mosquitoes had left any of me to lie anywhere. At last, to my joy, after we had been six mortal hours on our stomachs, he got up, and said we might as well go, as the bear would not come till to-morrow night.

Next night again we were out, and this time were more fortunate. As I lay in my old place, stomach flat on the ground, rifle up to my cheek, I fancied I heard a heavy tread and a rustling about forty yards on the left. "If my heart would only leave off jumping in that absurd way, almost lifting me from the ground, I might get a chance!" Nearer it came—nearer still—till I thought I could see a great black object about twenty yards off through the low scrub. So I took aim and fired; and then we both got to our feet, and could just get a glimpse of a dark substance making off down a ravine. The bear was hit; that was evident by the blood; but where, was the point. We saw no more of him, though we followed him up some hours. But my host shot him a few weeks afterwards, while I was over the mountains; at least, he supposed it was the same, for it had a recent bullet-wound in its fat haunch. I cannot describe how this information relieved a lurking fear I had entertained that I had shot one of my friend's heifers. Such was my experience in bear-hunting, and I fancy I was luckier than most of my countrymen are, for I got the credit of having wounded a bear, whereas I am still inclined to believe I sent a bullet into the haunch of one of my friend's cows.

The next morning, after bidding adieu to mine host, I started across the fields to the Trysil river. It was a beautiful autumn morning; the fog still hung lazily round the mountains, but slowly lifted itself up like a reluctant stage curtain in a theatre. I had a stout little mountain pony to carry the "impedimenta," on which I could ride when I pleased; my guide carried my rods, while I shouldered my rifle, thinking that a reindeer might come in our way. After a two hours' rugged ascent, we reached the open field. The scenery assumed the most savage desolate appearance I ever witnessed, or desire to witness again. For miles around, the ground was covered with nothing but an unlimited supply of reindeer moss, which imparted a "custard-mustard" sort of tint to the landscape. If a fellow feels out of humour with civilised life in general, and humanity in particular, let me commend him to a week on the Norwegian fields. During the whole ride of ten hours I did not see more than ten animated objects (barring mosquitoes). One of these was an eagle, which was soaring at a great height above a mountain lake, and which suddenly, as if impelled by some instantaneous idea, discharged itself down the most perpendicular "header" I ever saw, right into the lake. It was ten seconds under water, and then emerged with a large fish in its claws, with which it flew off in triumph. Subsequently, I caught several fish

bearing marks of eagles' claws on their backs, so that the birds occasionally miss their fish, it seems—a comfort for men.

The feeling of loneliness and solitariness a ride on the fields is calculated to produce on a man's nerves, especially if he be at all given to hypochondriacal affections, can scarcely be realised. What a thing to fall down in a fit, or to break a leg, or to undergo any other such-like unpleasantnesses to which flesh is heir, in such a dismal place, far out of reach of human assistance. The reflection that the crows would come and pick you over, or the gluttons gorge themselves on your carcase, or the wolves worry each other over you, might make a nervous person extremely uncomfortable. And this, I came to the conclusion, after deep meditation, must be the use of mosquitoes: They keep a traveller's thoughts from dwelling on such topics, and tax all his ingenuity to prevent them from eating him up. Discerning little pests! they would not so much as look at my "unwashed, unkempt" guide, but stuck to me with a pertinacity that made it clear that the smell of a clean Englishman's blood was dear to them. As an interesting question to entomologists, I venture to propound, "What do they feed on up there, when there are no travellers?"

Towards evening we reached the river; the farm-house where I was to put up, lay on the opposite bank; and, while the pony of his own accord swam across, we rowed over. The farm-house, or, more properly speaking, cluster of log-houses, lay at a short distance from the river, in a thickly-wooded ravine. My guide had been instructed to introduce me to the good people, and to request them to take me in; so while they were getting a room ready for me, I sauntered down to the river, rod in hand. It was a delicious evening; the wind, which had just sprung up, gave that propitious ripple to the surface of the water which a fly-fisher delights to see; quickly putting on a cast, I threw into the stream. The fish were jumping on all sides. Whether I was the first Englishman who had ever fished there, I know not, but certainly I rose a fish nearly every time. In three hours I had bagged forty trout and grayling, weighing altogether thirty pounds, good weight. The largest was four pounds.

It was then time to go home and get to bed, for I was rather stiff and tired, after a day on a hard Norwegian saddle. "How delicious to get a room like this all to oneself!" I thought, as I walked into mine. Scarcely was the thought conceived, than in marched the whole household, and quietly ranged themselves round the room to have a good look at the "Engelsk-mand." After having stared at me in silence for a few minutes, they proceeded to examine my watch, pipe, fly-book, &c., which lay on the table. "Well! now they'll go, surely," I said to myself, "as they have looked at everything." A bright thought seized me. "I'll begin to undress; they'll be sure to take that hint!" I sat down on the edge of the bed, and leisurely took off my boots. No! that wouldn't move

them. "Well! I'll try what divesting myself of my knickerbockers will do!" Vain hope! The more I took off, the more interested they seemed in the operation. I made a bolt, as I was, into bed. How long they remained I know not, for I soon fell fast asleep, and only awoke next morning when the good woman brought me in a large cup of hot coffee and a small bowl of cold water, holding rather less than half a pint, to wash in. Drinking the first and discarding the second, I went and plunged into the river, to the dismay and astonishment of two or three men, who shouted after me and ran away. They thought I had gone mad, for a Norwegian peasant never washes himself but once a year, and then only a very little!

I remained there three days, and if any roving Englishman wants to know what good trout-fishing is, let him go to Trvsiil, on the borders of Sweden.

On my return to Rendalen, my host had planned an elk-hunt for me. There were not many reindeer, he thought, but he felt sure he could show me an elk within a week, if I liked. Of course I liked! So one morning we started early for the forest, accompanied by a cunning old hunter holding a little dog in leash, reputed a wonder for tracking elk, bear, or reindeer.

A Norwegian mountaineer is as sure-footed as his pony. See him skip over a river, scarcely touching the stones which here and there invitingly peep up above the surface, but which are often unsteady. Instinct and long practice teach him where to put his foot just at the right time. How I envied him! My first attempt at imitation sent me floundering on my back in the middle of a brook; but I got more adroit afterwards.

There are few things more uninteresting in my opinion than the interior of a Norwegian pine forest, though the Poet Laureate *did* come out in the same boat with me all the way to Norway only to hear the "Æolian-harp-like" murmur of the wind through its boughs. It is the same thing over and over again; no variety, nothing to relieve the monotony, not even a jay's music to enliven one. No wonder he made no allusion to it in the *Idylls*, which came out shortly afterwards, for I'll be hanged if I could see any poetry in it. I can solemnly aver that for a whole hour I saw no winged animal (mosquitoes always excepted) save a black woodpecker, which looked more like a Wellington boot with a red top, climbing up the rotten stem of a fir-tree, than anything else.

All at once I saw my hunter slump down on his knees in a devotional attitude, with his eyes humbly cast down to the ground. The very dog, too, seemed to be similarly affected. Then he got up and proceeded to a low birch-tree, and commenced examining the leaves one by one, while his dog stood up all the while on his hind legs, and sniffed away at them as if he would collapse. At length it dawned upon me that the hunter was not religious-mad, but that an elk had something to do with his condition, especially when he showed me a leaf which had only recently been browsed, and which a rabbit could

not possibly have reached, even if such creatures did exist in Norway. It was a fine sight to watch the hunter and his dog: they seemed to understand each other thoroughly, as they kept looking at one another, as if comparing notes.

There are few animals so wary as an elk. Living in the thickest parts of the forest, their ears stand them in better stead than their eyes. In hunting elks you must not think of winking. The old hunter and his dog went first; it was as good as a play to watch them, each setting a foot to the ground at the same moment and with such a grave air; I came next, following as lightly as fourteen stone could. Maybe we had gone in this way half an hour, and I was beginning to get fatigued, when all at once we came plump on two full-grown elk, at about sixty yards' distance. How noble they looked! Quite six feet in height! A sight like this is a reward for a day's toil, and ducking into the bargain! A sight like this—

"Bother your sights!" cries Bogus, to whom I have just been telling the story; "can't you say if you shot one, instead of apostrophising their beauty in that ridiculous manner!"

"My dear Bogus, I *did not* shoot one: firstly, because the hunter's head was in the way; secondly, because, when his head was out of the way, the elks had gone; thirdly, because my rifle missed fire. So I ground my teeth in despair, and put on a fresh cap."

But, a few days afterwards I was more fortunate. We started early; that is, I, my host, and the hunter—who I now learnt from my friend had only recently returned from the fortress at Christiania, where he had worked his time of imprisonment out, as a galley-slave, for having killed his brother. I felt extremely glad I had not been aware of the circumstance when I had to bivouac out alone with him in the forest.

Before long we came on some very fresh tracks; at least, the hunter and his little dog seemed to think so, judging from the serious and earnest way in which they regarded them. Further and further we penetrated into the recesses of the forest, stepping softly and gently as we went. The dog became intensely excited, but never gave tongue. The well-trained little creatures are taught never to bark when held in leash; it is only when they are set at liberty that it is etiquette to do so. A crashing sound, as if an elephant were dashing through a jungle, made us turn our eyes to the left of us, and we could just discern a monstrous elk disappearing between the birch-trees.

Now was the time to slip the dog. No sooner was he at liberty than off he set in pursuit, giving tongue most lustily, as if to make up for his long and continued silence. The reason why he barked was plain enough; if he had not barked, it would have been a matter of sheer impossibility to follow on the right course through the tangled and intricate forest. His voice began to grow faint and fainter, and I began to fear that we should lose the elk. But neither of my companions seemed to

share in my anxiety; a complacent look of assurance on their faces seemed to say that there were ten chances to one against the elk; we had already gone at double-quick for half an hour, when the baying of the dog sounded louder and more plainly. The elk, then, was at bay.

"Yes, you go first, and fire straight," intimated rather than said the hunter.

A couple of cartridges were quickly thrust into my breech-loader. Cautiously proceeding up a steep bank, I peeped over the top, where the elk was at bay. Yes, there he was, stamping and dashing at the little dog with his horns and long fore feet: who, however, easily avoided the elk, as he kept dodging about in close proximity to his nose.

An easier mark could hardly be imagined, so, raising my rifle and aiming at the shoulder, I put in a bullet at about forty yards' distance, and the great animal fell over on his side dead. I shall never forget my excitement—indeed, the hunter, I am sure, thought I was mad, especially when, in an exuberant fit of generosity, I presented him with a five-dollar note.

In my opinion, there is much more sport in hunting elk after the Norwegian manner, than after the Swedish, as described in Lloyd's interesting book of sport. To see a good hunter and his dog at work is a sight not to be seen every day, and the memory of it will long abide by me.

FAT PEOPLE.

WHAT is the average weight of a man? At what age does he attain his greatest weight? How much heavier are men than women? What would be the weight of fat people; and what of very fat people?

M. Quetelet, of Brussels, some years ago, deemed such questions quite within the scope of his extensive series of researches on man (*Sur l'Homme, et le Développement de ses Facultés*). He got hold of everybody he could, everywhere, and weighed them all. He weighed the babies, he weighed the boys and girls, he weighed the youths and maidens, he weighed men and women, he weighed collegians, soldiers, factory people, pensioners; and, as he had no particular theory to disturb his facts, he honestly set down such results as he met with. All the infants in the Foundling Hospital at Brussels for a considerable period were weighed; and the results were compared with others obtained at similar establishments in Paris and Moscow. The average returns show that a citizen of the world, on the first day of his appearance in public, weighs about six pounds and a half; a boy-baby a little more, a girl-baby a little less. Some very modest babies, hardly turning the scale with two pounds and a half, while other pretentious youngsters boast of ten or eleven pounds. When Shylock asked for his "pound of flesh," he asked for an equivalent to a little less than one-sixth of a baby. How the tiny ones grow during childhood, we need not trace here; but it may be interesting to know that girls and

boys at twelve years, of age are nearly equal in weight; after which limit, males are heavier than females of the same ages. M. Quetelet grouped his thousands of people according to ages, and found that the young men of twenty averaged a hundred and forty-three pounds each, while the young women of twenty gave an average of a hundred and twenty pounds. His men reached their heaviest bulk at about thirty-five, when their average weight was a hundred and fifty-two pounds; but the women slowly fattened on until fifty, when their average was one hundred and twenty-nine pounds. Men and women together, the weight at full growth averaged almost exactly ten stones, or a hundred and forty pounds. As M. Quetelet wished to be accurate, and as he naturally had not many opportunities of weighing people without their clothes, he weighed the clothes with the people as well as with the people; and he came to a conclusion that the clothing of Belgians of all classes may be averaged at about one-eighteenth of the total weight of a man, and one twenty-fourth of the total weight of a woman. Whether these ratios would apply to English men and women at the present day is rather a nice question of tailoring and dressmaking; but, so far as concerns M. Quetelet and his Belgians, the figures give eight or nine pounds weight for a man's dress, and five or six for a woman's. With these deductions for dress, the inquiries show that full-grown men and women are about twenty times as heavy as they were on the first day of their existence. Of course averages are here only meant. The averages were formed from men ranging from a hundred and eight to two hundred and twenty pounds, and women from eighty-eight to two hundred and seven pounds. M. Quetelet tried to estimate what was the actual weight of human nature over which Leopold was king. He found that, taking all ages and conditions—nobles, clergy, tinkers, tailors, wives, maidens, boys, girls, and babies, all included—the average weight was almost exactly one hundred English pounds avoirdupois for each human being; a quantity easy to remember, at any rate. Britons are a trifle more massive than Belgians; but, setting this minor difference aside, we find that the whole body of us here, in the United Kingdom, weigh about three thousand million pounds—not a very spiritual or sentimental estimate, certainly, but one that we can mentally realise by finding that it is just about equal to the weight of four months' consumption of coals in the metropolis. As chemists tell us that we are furnaces, with food for fuel, the analogy is not so remote, after all. Of course, any conclusions derived from average results must depend for their accuracy on the number of instances which supply the average; and it might be that M. Quetelet's inferences would need to be modified a little when applied to the natives of other countries. All the recorded weighings, however, agree tolerably in average results. Several years ago, eighty young collegians were weighed at Cambridge; they ranged from eighteen to twenty-three years of age, and their

average weight was a hundred and fifty-one pounds, or ten stones eleven pounds. This tells a good tale of the batsmen and oarsmen of the Cam; for Frenchmen and Belgians of those ages would not reach quite to such an average. Factory life lessens the weight below the level of open-air life. A few years back, Mr. Cowell caused fifteen hundred children and young persons in Manchester and Stockport, some employed in cotton factories, and some leading an out-of-door life, to be weighed; he found that, at the age of eighteen, the average weights were as follows; factory youths, a hundred and six pounds; out-door youths, a hundred and twenty-six pounds; factory girls, a hundred and six pounds; out-door girls, a hundred and twenty-one pounds. This seems to denote that youths are relatively more stunted than girls by factory life. Professor J. D. Forbes, availing himself of the facilities afforded by his scientific position at Edinburgh, weighed no fewer than eight hundred youths and young men who attended the University in that city. He divided them into nationalities and into ages; he found that at fifteen years old, the average for each of the three kingdoms was about a hundred and fourteen pounds; and that at the age of twenty-five, the Englishmen averaged a hundred and fifty-one pounds, the Scotchmen a hundred and fifty-two, and the Irishmen a hundred and fifty-five. The Belgian average for that age is about a hundred and fifty pounds, and the French average a few pounds less.

Let us say, then, that a full-grown man in Western Europe averages about eleven stones (a hundred and fifty-four pounds) in weight, at thirty or thirty-five years of age. We cannot be far wrong in this, and it will serve us as a standard of comparison for estimating the fleshy virtues of notably fat people. We say fleshy in a popular sense, leaving to physiologists to determine how much is flesh and how much fat, in a bulky person.

It is observable that very thin people do not announce their thinness abroad. We speak, truth to tell, somewhat contemptuously of them. We call such a man Lanky Laurence, or Pill Garlic, or Thread-paper, or Skin-and-Grief, or Bodkin, or Lath. Scarcely any man, except the Living Skeleton, ever exhibited himself on account of his thinness. What a poor object that same Claude Ambrose Seurat was! Born at Troyes in 1795, he was a baby of ordinary size, but began gradually to waste, until, at the age of twenty-one, he had less flesh and fat upon him than any full-grown person ever known. At the age of twenty-seven he was exhibited in London as the Living Skeleton. Anatomists and medical men were greatly interested in him; other spectators were shocked. The circumference of his arm was only five inches and a half at the largest part, and of his waist twenty-three inches below the ribs; his muscles were too weak to enable him to hold out his arms horizontally; and his attempts at walking were like those of a person whose "foot is asleep;" his skin was like dry parchment,

and his ribs were as clearly defined as a bundle of canes. Thin people, we have said, seldom exhibit on account of their thinness, though many have done so for their stoutness. It is those who grow largely in excess, and not those who lag far behind the average of eleven stones, who claim for themselves a place in history.

M. Laurent notices a Parisian boy who must have frightened his parents a little, for he weighed a hundred and four pounds at four years old. There was a boy at Winlaton, in Durham, about a century ago, who, at the age of ten years, measured thirteen inches round the thigh, and thirty-three round the waist; he was a queer fellow in other ways, for he had six toes on each foot, and six fingers on one hand. In 1784 died an Irish gentleman, Mr. Lovelace Love, from very fatness. So immense was his bulk, that his coffin is said to have measured seven feet in length, four in breadth, and three and a half in depth (though we doubt these figures); how many pounds of flesh he could have furnished to Shylock is not narrated. Mr. Baker, who died at Worcester in 1766, was so large a man that, in the language of the local prints, "his coffin measured seven feet over, and was bigger than an ordinary hearse, and part of the wall was obliged to be taken down to admit its passage." Six years afterwards there died at Usk, in Monmouthshire, one Mr. Philip Mason, whose dimensions were recorded as follows; round the wrist, eleven inches; round the upper arm, twenty-one inches; round the chest, sixty inches; round the largest part of the body, seventy-two inches; round the thigh, thirty-seven inches; round the calf of the leg, twenty-five inches. In the *Dictionnaire des Sciences Médicales*, an account is given of a French woman, Marie Françoise Clay, who attained an enormous bulk before her death, in 1806. Married at the age of twenty-five, she had six children, and became fatter and fatter every year she lived, though plunged in deep poverty. It was not good living that made her fat. She measured sixty-two inches round the body; neck she had none, for her small head sank down between two enormous shoulders. At night she had to sleep nearly upright, to avoid suffocation. Her day was spent at a church porch in Paris, where she sat to excite pity, and draw forth charity by her fatness and rags.

The above instances are wanting in facilities for comparison, on account of the actual weights being, in most cases, unrecorded. We will, therefore, dive into old newspapers and registers, for instances more specifically definite on this point. "Died lately" (so said a newspaper a century old this year), "Mrs. Harris, opposite St. Anne's Church, Soho, weighing three hundred and twenty pounds." Poor Mrs. Harris! her weight was a little more than double that (eleven stones) which we find to be the average of middle-aged full-grown men. There was a Kentish farmer and innkeeper, one Mr. Palmer, who attracted much attention in the early part of the present century by his enormous bulk. He weighed

three hundred and fifty pounds (twenty-five stones), thereby beating Mrs. Harris by several chalks. Five ordinary men could be buttoned at one time within his waistcoat. He came to London to see the famous Daniel Lambert. The two men looked at each other. Lambert was vastly the superior of Palmer in bulk; but the latter puffed so much through his fatness that Lambert pitied him, as a man to whom life must have been a burden. Palmer went home much mortified; his claim to notoriety was suddenly eclipsed by a rival, and his vexation hastened his death. A part of his inn, the Golden Lion, had to be taken down to allow room for his coffin to be removed; and as there was no hearse large enough or strong enough to carry it, the coffin was conveyed to the grave in a timber-waggon. Ryland, the engraver, who ended his days in a shameful way towards the close of the last century, had an apprentice named John Love. Love left London after his master's death, and settled at his native place in Dorsetshire. He was so exceedingly thin and meagre that a physician advised him to eat liberally. The advice was so well taken, that Love became a gormandiser; the food turned to fat instead of to muscle and sinew; and his fatness killed him at the age of forty, when he weighed three hundred and sixty-four pounds (about twenty-six stones). Growing bulkier and bulkier in our examples, the next on our brief list is Mrs. Dorothy Collier, who died about a century ago, and who was (as the local prints assert) "supposed to be the largest woman in the north of England." It is to be hoped so, seeing that Mrs. Collier weighed four hundred and twenty pounds (thirty stones, or seven stones heavier than Mrs. Harris). Her coffin was forty inches wide, and thirty deep. This worthy lady was, however, beaten by Frederica Ahrens, a young German woman, who was living at Paris in 1819. She weighed thirteen pounds when born, forty-two at six months old, a hundred and fifty at four years, and by the age of twenty had attained a weight of four hundred and fifty pounds (thirty-two stones). She measured sixty-five inches round the body, and eighteen inches round the arm. Altogether, Frederica must have been a formidable young person to deal with, for she could lift two hundred and fifty pounds weight with each hand. Mr. Benjamin Bower, a native of Holt, in Dorsetshire, attained a weight of four hundred and seventy pounds (nearly thirty-four stones) at the time of his death, in 1763. He was active enough to travel from Holt to London by stage-coach a few days before he died. As in the cases of Mr. Baker and Mr. Palmer, a part of the house had to be removed to afford egress for the coffin containing the massive remains of Mr. Bower. Günz, the German writer, mentions the case of a young woman who weighed four hundred and ninety-two pounds (thirty-five stones); but of this prodigy of womanhood we have no further information. In 1774, there died at Cowthorpe, in Lincolnshire, one Mr. Pell, who weighed five

hundred and sixty pounds (about forty stones). Whether he had expressed any wish to have his mightiness particularly taken care of does not appear; but he was enclosed in three coffins, the united weight of which, with himself, exceeded three thousand pounds (nearly a ton and a half). Mr. Bright, of Essex, was a person of great notoriety in the early days of the reign of George the Third. He was a grocer at Maldon, and belonged to a family noted for their personal bulkiness. He was a jolly fellow, who did not allow either fatness or anything else to interfere with his good humour; and his biographer gives him the character of being "a cheerful companion, a kind husband, a tender father, a good master, a friendly neighbour, and an honest man;" insomuch that fat people would be glad to accept him as their representative man. Nevertheless, he had a sensible and reasonable foreboding that the later years of a man of his enormous bulk, if his life were prolonged, would bring more pain than pleasure with them; and a few days before his death at the early age of thirty, he expressed a willingness to die. His weight was six hundred and sixteen pounds (forty-four stones). Seven men were, on one particular occasion, buttoned up within his waistcoat. When his career was ended, and his body was encased in its monster coffin, not only walls, but staircases, had to be cut through before it could be got out; twelve men drew the low carriage on which the coffin was placed; and "an engine was fixed up on the church," as the local chroniclers narrate, to lower the coffin into the grave. There was an Irishman, Roger Byrne, who died in 1804, whose bulk was so great that his admirers claimed for him the merit of being "several stones heavier than the celebrated Mr. Bright of Essex." It required thirty men to carry to the grave the bier on which his body was laid. Mr. Spooner, a Tamworth man, who was living in 1775, attained a weight of nearly forty-nine stones (six hundred and eighty pounds). He had long been too heavy to walk, his legs being unable to bear him. He measured four feet three inches across the shoulders. It is recorded of him that "his fatness once saved his life; for, being at Atherstone market, and some difference arising between him and a Jew, the Jew stabbed him in the belly with a penknife; but the blade, being short, did not pierce his bowels, or even pass through the fat which defended them."

Walk up, Daniel Lambert, king of fat men! In 1803, Lambert was keeper of the old county bridewell at Leicester. He had, at that time, an invincible repugnance to have his weight ascertained, being annoyed at the comments made upon him as a mountain of adipose substance; but some of his acquaintances, determined to settle the matter, contrived one day to have a vehicle in which he was riding drawn over a road weighing-machine. We have no record at hand of his weight at that time; but changes having been made in the prison arrangements at Leicester, Lambert consented to come

to London to exhibit himself—no longer unwilling to have his bulk and weight talked about. In 1806, the following advertisement appeared: "Mr. Daniel Lambert, of Leicester, the heaviest man that ever lived. At the age of thirty-six years he weighs upwards of fifty stone (fourteen pounds to the stone), or eighty-seven stones four pounds London weight (i.e. butchers' weight of eight pounds to the stone), which is ninety-one pounds more than the great Mr. Bright weighed. Mr. Lambert will see company at his house, Number Fifty-three Piccadilly, next Albany, nearly opposite St. James's Church, from eleven to five o'clock. Tickets of Admission, One Shilling each." He was one of the lions of London for a time. His exhibition-room (what a famous place Piccadilly has been for giants, dwarfs, lean people, and fat people!) was visited by the high-born as well as by the vulgar; and he appears to have been respected as well as looked at, for he was a kind and sensible man. He was always shocked at the idea of any personal indignity or insult being cast upon him on the ground of his bulk, by coarse-minded persons; and this known susceptibility was generally respected. Mr. Lambert was healthy in spite of his obesity. Some years earlier, when he was thrice the weight of an ordinary man, he could carry a weight of five hundred pounds. During the last fifteen years of his life, he drank nothing but water, and was usually cheerful and good humoured. His bulk increased year by year, until, shortly before his death, in 1809, he attained the unprecedented weight of seven hundred and thirty-nine pounds (nearly fifty-three stones). His coffin was seventy-six inches long by fifty-two wide, and contained a hundred and twelve square feet of elm. The coffin was regularly built upon axles and wheels; and not only the window, but also the side of a room, had to be taken down, to afford a passage for the bulky mass. The wheeled coffin was drawn to St. Martin's churchyard, where a gradual descent was made to the grave by excavating the ground. We remember seeing, a few years ago, at a bootmaker's in the City, a pair of shoes, the counterpart of some which had been made for the weighty Daniel by a former owner of the shop; they were, as Thomas Hood said of a stage-coachman's great-coat,

Too broad to be conceived by any narrow mind.

REMINISCENCES OF BROGG.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

AND it's C. J. Brogg, mind—not H. K.—who himself made some figure in the world, but was, in my opinion, a very superficial character—a sort of martin or swallow skimming over the surface of the field of knowledge, not going over it inch by inch as I have seen a wise old black-bird do at four o'clock a.m., securing all the early worms, and digesting them, too, and profiting by them. This last was more like the conduct of C. J., who went deep down into everything which he had to do with.

I have often wondered, and so no doubt have others, that no memoir or biography has yet appeared of C. J. He had no objection to it himself; on the contrary, I remember his saying to me on one occasion, "If, my dear Bradshaw"—such was our intimacy, that he was in the habit of addressing me in this familiar manner, or even sometimes as "my dear William"—"if," said my distinguished friend, "any incidents in my career should seem to you worthy of record; if any words which I have let drop, or may hereafter let drop, should seem to you or others likely to be useful to society, I have no objection to their obtaining publicity, far from it. I would be the last person to wish that a feeling of false modesty on my part should interfere with my posthumous usefulness." Those were his very words; and what words. I cannot let them pass without calling attention to that phrase "posthumous usefulness." How much is expressed in those two words. I remember that my friend himself seemed pleased with them, repeating them afterwards softly to himself, "posthumous usefulness—posthumous usefulness—yes, let us be posthumously useful, at all events, and come of it what may."

And posthumously useful thou shalt be, my friend, if it lies in my power to make thee so.

I never knew any man act and speak so exactly as a man *should* act and speak for biographical purposes as my friend C. J. Brogg. What he had to say he always said in words so choicely placed, that to have omitted or altered one of them would have been to ruin the sentence. And he never did alter or omit a word, as I can testify with certainty, having frequently heard him make the same remark, or utter the same opinion, in different societies, and always in the same words. "Although the imitities," he would say, speaking of Shakespeare, "are frequently disregarded, and the dramatic proprietors outraged from time to time, we are yet so dazzled by the brilliancy of our great bard that we forget to censure even where censure is due, and both the critical faculty and the judgment sink away abashed before the sunlight of Shakespeare's genius." How often have I heard these words uttered when Shakespeare was under discussion, yet never without being impressed by them. The first time I heard them I thought I should have fainted. I got more used to them afterwards.

How very quick he was, too, sometimes, especially I have remarked when in his own house, and when his brother was present. And here I must again remark that it is not H. K. of whom I speak. H. K. was only half-brother to the subject of this biography, and always seemed to me to bear him a certain grudge, arising most likely from jealousy. His real brother, James, was wholly devoted to C. J., and really seemed to live only to please his illustrious relation. I remember on one occasion, when James was giving an account of an illness from which he had recently recovered, and ended by quoting the prescription by means of which he had been re-

stored to health, "Fiat pilula," said James, as he reached the end, and reading the prescription from his pocket-book.

"Ruat cœlum," put in our remarkable friend, taking advantage of a momentary pause on his brother's part. Of course there was a general roar at this. The ingenious perversion of the magnificent proverb, "Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum," was entirely irresistible. I find, by-the-by, that this particular instance of readiness must have given considerable pleasure to C. J. himself, the prescription story having again been related by James Brogg, on another occasion when I happened to be present, and on which C. J. came in with exactly the same words at the same crisis, and with almost more readiness than before.

The regard which existed between these two brothers was remarkable, and C. J.'s conversation was an entirely different thing when James was present, to what it was in his absence. Especially was that wonderful quickness and readiness displayed more in the presence of James than at other times. Especially have I seen this last ply his brother with questions on the most abstruse points, and receive an immediate answer, while others, putting quite a simple case to our friend, would receive, virtually, none at all. For instance, I remember that one day at dinner he was suddenly asked by James whether, if he had had the choice, he would have been Shakespeare or Milton? "Nay, Jacques," answered my ready friend, calling his brother by this sort of nickname, which always amused us very much, "nay, Jacques, you have put a singular question, and one which is sufficiently difficult to answer; but I think, had I been either of the great men you mention, I could have said, 'Were I not Alexander I would be Diogenes, or were I not Diogenes I would be Alexander.' As it is, however, I must be content with being Brogg."

And who, or what manner of man was this Brogg? Let me answer the last question first. At the period when I knew him best, and when I also believe that his powers were at the zenith, viz. at about thirty years of age, the appearance of C. J. Brogg was something of this sort:

He was above the middle size, inclining, indeed, to be tall.

His neck was long, and the shoulders sloped away from it with a rapid and majestic declension, somewhat similar to what we observe in the soda-water bottle.

The body increased in bulk from the shoulders downwards.

The legs were long, and exquisitely slender.

His costume never varied. He dressed entirely in black, and his coat, which was a kind of loose dress-coat, was ornamented by a velvet collar of immense depth, the cuffs descending to the second knuckles.

He always wore a white neckcloth.

He yawned frequently, especially towards evening.

The expression of C. J.'s countenance was pre-eminently, and, above all things, calm.

His brow was lofty and pointed; indeed, his head altogether was high and conical, somewhat similar to that of our late lamented monarch, William the Fourth. The head, however, of the subject of this memoir gained an additional height from the fact that his hair rose in majestic curls high above it.

The dressing of C. J.'s hair, like his costume, never varied, and I may say that there was one powerful flat curl on the left temple to which I was absolutely attached.

The parting was entirely concealed.

He never presented the ridiculous appearance of a man who has had his hair cut. It was always the same length.

C. J.'s eyes were of a pale grey tint, and were slow in their movements; the eyelids were heavy with thought. His nose pensive, and peaceful, also aquiline.

His mouth was remarkable. It was, except when he spoke, or ate, always closely shut. The lips were then almost invisible. A modest and retiring chin completes the portrait. C. J. has been thought to resemble the illustrious Canning.

No relationship, however, existed between these great men.

I have described Brogg externally, but the reader wants to know more. Where shall we begin? With his ancestors—followers of the Conqueror to a man, comers-over or come-overers with William, every one of them. I don't like that sort of thing myself; perhaps other people don't either. I shall expect the reader, then, to take the Brogg pedigree for granted. It were a good rule surely that the subject of a biography should be born before we have anything to say to him.

Brogg was born at Brighton. A very remarkable circumstance attended his birth. It was this: the nurse, a person of prodigious experience, remarked, on beholding him, that he was one of the finest boys she had ever seen, and that she shouldn't wonder if he *turned out something remarkable*. And ah! Brighton, little dost thou know how from that day when thou wert first connected with the immortal name of Brogg; little dost thou know, I say, that from that moment thy greater prosperity doth date. Know it now, then, and bestir thyself to do honour to this great man, calling a street or a crescent after him at any rate, as the least thou canst do. I once—I am sorry to have to relate it—went down with C. J. to visit his native town. Coming from the station weary and travel-stained, my distinguished friend wished to remain incog., and, with that end in view, concealed his face behind the collar of his cloak. Later in the day, however, when dressed and prepared for inspection, my friend walked on the pier, and I accompanied him. I expected that we should have been mobbed, but, strange to say, we were allowed to pass along unmolested, nor did any one stare at us or turn to look round after we had passed. "Ah, I see how it is," remarked my friend at last. "They think I am here incognito, and respect it."

Great delicacy—great delicacy.” But I thought he seemed a little hurt notwithstanding. At the hotel it was the same. “They will know me there,” my illustrious friend had said, “and we shall be a little bothered with company, no doubt, and not allowed to pay the bill, and so on.” Observing that apparently no one recognised us at the hotel, I took an opportunity to mention the name of his guest to the landlord. “Brogg, sir; very good, sir,” answered this gross man. “James, put down the name of Brogg in the hall-book in case of letters; and—George, have you taken that sherry into eight?” I may also add that when the time came we were allowed to pay the bill.

My friend, to the best of my knowledge, never set his foot in Brighton again.

But this is a digression. How far have we got regularly? We have stated that C. J. Brogg was born at Brighton, and that his ancestors came over with the Conqueror. We have got C. J. born at any rate, and that is a great deal. As a child, I am in a condition to assert that he was a heavy feeder and a hard sleeper, and that he was slow “to take notice.” Hear this, ye who believe in prodigies, in infant phenomena, in precocious talent! Brogg—C. J. Brogg—was slow to take notice. “Bless his little heart,” said the nurse on one occasion—and this I have, mind, on the best authority—“he do take notice uncommon slow, but when he have got hold of a thing he seems to keep it tight like.” And this, the characteristic of the child, appeared pre-eminently in the man afterwards. I do not say that my revered friend was swift in his perception; he was not. But once let him seize an idea, or aught else, and it was his for ever. His ideas were permanent, and no alterations of condition subsequent to the period when his opinions were formed ever produced the slightest change in them. No, an opinion once formed, was formed for ever.

This, again, is a digression, into which we have been led by those words of C. J.’s nurse. It seems to me probable that such digressions may occur not unfrequently in the course of these pages.

The subject of our memoir was brought up at home, and was one of the triumphant results of private tuition. The plan adopted by his tutor was, so to speak, conversational. His lessons, given orally, naturally led to questions on the part of the pupil, and these again to answers on the part of the master. This gentleman used to inform Mr. and Mrs. Brogg that these questions put by their son were calculated to stagger all ordinary intellects, by reason of their great depth, and he added, moreover, that his pupil’s reflective nature sometimes almost frightened him, as he would frequently ask a question relating to some matter which had been under discussion a week before, and had not been touched upon since, and the learned man would add that these questions were very frequently posers, and calculated to throw doubt on certain historical and other questions, which thoughtless persons have hitherto

taken too much for granted. The tutor frankly admitted that the boy would have been too much for anybody but himself, and on one occasion the boy’s mother overheard the learned man complaining to himself—being of course unconscious that the fond parent was within hearing—and saying that “the boy was more than his match, and that he (the tutor) was a fool to him.”

To give an instance of this reflective power on the part of Brogg—the boy—so wonderfully to be developed afterwards in Brogg—the man—I may mention that on a certain day his instructor had spoken at great length and with considerable fervour of the wisdom of proverbs, and how they were the safest guides in the world, and in the course of conversation had given many instances of the truth of what he asserted, and shown how many mistakes in the course of the world’s history might have been avoided, had those who made the said mistakes paid attention to the teaching of proverbs.

Very well. The Rev. Christopher Smear, which was the tutor’s name, held forth upon the subject convincingly enough. He said that “there was a silver lining to every cloud,” and that “it was a long lane that had no turning,” and that such thoughts as these ought to carry a man through all difficulties which might come in his way. He said that a “bird in the hand was worth two in the bush,” and that thus we learnt never to abandon an advantage of which we felt secure in the hope of attaining a greater one, even concerning whose attainment we might be in doubt. He added, that you could never test a friend until you had tried him in your need, and he concluded smilingly with a saying based upon economic principles, and advised his young friend “always to look after the pence, and the pounds would take care of themselves.” A week passed away, and the attention of our youthful student was solicited and given to all kinds of various themes, and deeply did master and pupil plunge down into the reservoirs of knowledge, when one day the latter suddenly reverted to the subject of proverbs. The inevitable week had passed away, and the process of mental digestion was complete.

“You were talking the other day, Mr. Smear,” the dear child remarked, “about proverbs. You spoke in high terms of the wisdom contained in them, and you stated that any one who was guided by their dictates could hardly fail to go right. May I ask if you still adhere to these sentiments?”

“Undoubtedly I do,” was the reply.

“Then, sir,” inquired the youthful Brogg, “I would ask, what is he to do who, having decided that his manner of life shall be influenced alone by the wisdom of proverbs, finds himself between two of these, so to speak, finger-posts of wisdom, pointing diametrically in opposite directions?”

“But no one could possibly find himself in such a position,” answered the learned Smear, a little rashly.

“Pardon me, sir,” replied the boy, respectfully. “You told me the other day that I should ‘take care

of the pence, and the pounds would take care of themselves,' and so I would; but that I find another proverb of equal weight and influence with the first, which distinctly affirms that if I am 'penny wise,' I shall be 'pound foolish.' Now, sir, how am I to act in a dilemma such as that?"

The Reverend Mr. Smear stared wildly at his pupil, ran his fingers through his hair, commenced two or three abortive sentences, and then, looking suddenly at his watch, exclaimed:

"Bless my heart, our exercise hour commenced ten minutes ago; get your hat at once, and—let us walk."

Now here we have Brogg all over. Brogg the child, Brogg the boy, Brogg the man. As an instance of profound and profitable reflection, this that I have given seems to me to be unparalleled, and there is no display or flourish about it. This wondrous difficulty is not started when the subject is first brought forward by Smear. There might be something ostentatious about that. No, a week elapses, and the objection is made with modesty and propriety.

I must give another instance of the same thing. It was part of the Reverend Mr. Smear's system of education to devote one of the hours which were given to study, to general information, and a mighty successful plan it was. It was in the course of the hour devoted to general information that the proverbs had come under discussion, and where should we have been if that had not happened. On the occasion to which I would now refer it happened that the conversation had drifted into the desert, and the Reverend Smear, who had travelled in the East, was laying down the law as to the best mode of acting in encounters with wild beasts.

"Look at him," says Smear. "The human eye is too much for any animal, depend upon it; there is a majesty, a concentration, a power of dominion before which all must give way. The whole feline tribe are especially amenable to this influence, and will turn and flee before a steady and protracted gaze."

A week elapsed, the general information hour arrived again, and our young friend once more had a question to put.

"I say, Mr. Smear, with regard to what you said the other day about the influence of the human eye, I have been thinking a great deal, and making some experiments. You know the cat, as you have often told me, is a feline animal, and I have been trying with all my might to make him look at me, but he won't. Now this seems to make it all doubtful about the wild beasts, for when an animal is rushing towards you as hard as he can bound, what is the use of your having a human eye, if you can't get him to look at it?"

There is something almost terrible about the closeness and acuteness of this reasoning. I believe that it was on the strength of these two searching replies that C. J.'s mother decided that that boy should be brought up to the bar. "A retort such as one of these," the good lady re-

marked, "would establish his career for ever; any court of law in England would quail before such a reply."

"Yes, my dear," replied Mr. Brogg sen., "but you must remember that, however good his replies may be, they wouldn't, in a court of law, give him a week to think them over."

One word, by-the-by, about Mr. Brogg senior. He was rather a rough old fellow, and scarcely fit to be the father of such a son. He used to say that he hated sentiment, and that sort of thing, and he thought that the boy (C. J.) was being made a fool of by his mother. He had, however, not much voice in the management of domestic matters, being absent all day in the City, at the bank in which he was a partner, and his wife being a person of extraordinary energy and activity. Old Brogg might, however, do as he liked with the other boy, James, so he was sent to school and brought up as other boys are, and was the apple of his father's eye. Nevertheless, James grew up, as has already appeared, with a profound belief in his brother, and with a conviction that everything should and would give way before him all through his life.

Mr. Brogg was a good man of business, and provided all the money which was wanted in his wife's establishment. For his own part, all that he expected was to find a good dinner on the table every day at seven o'clock, to be allowed to partake of it in peace, and, furthermore, to be permitted to retire to his own private room whenever he liked. There were people who frequented his house before whom he fled, refined souls who talked of things which he did not understand, and who never thought of taking him into the conversation. Before such he fled to his dearly beloved study, where he would plump down in his easy-chair, exclaiming: "Bless my heart and life, what a deal of nonsense is talked in this world." That done, his wrath was over, and he would give himself up to the Express and an occasional nap, and so pass a pleasant evening. And this, mind, if you can believe it, was said to be a clever man—a man whose opinion was waited for and looked up to in the City, and, forsooth, with brains worth ten of those contained in any one of the skulls of the geniuses in the next room. So his friends said, poor creatures! From what I have been able to glean from different sources, it has always seemed to me that there was nothing in old Brogg—positively nothing. Money, indeed, he may have known something about; but what's that? Shall we rank Finance with Feeling, or Shares with Sentiment?

No, dear reader, we will not do that. We may do many wrong things, but not that. Ah, Sentiment! who that knows thy delicious melting mood, will ever put aught into competition with thee? Sentiment! Is it pleasure or pain? Brogg (C. J.), as a child, once whacked a dog in order that he might have the rapture of sympathising with it afterwards, and uniting his tears with those of the whelp. Here is a nature! Here is a soul yearning over all creation, and

asking to be admitted to a share in all sorrow. And Sentiment, strange to say, is wholly apart from, and unconnected with, all action. When you hear a tale of sorrow and suffering, it may be inconvenient to you at the time to come forward with assistance pecuniary or otherwise, but are you thereby debarred from identifying yourself, so to speak, with this grief? Far from it. You feel! You cast your sympathy forth, as it were, into the great invisible ocean of Sentiment which flows around you, you feel that you are Man sympathising with Man, and a delicious peace envelops you as in a garment.

And this is Sentiment—hated by the father Brogg, and by those like him. Poor wretches, I say again. They may draw their cheques and send money to the relief of distress, but they will never know the joys of the sentimentalist even when he does nothing towards the relief of the distress for which he feels. I once knew an especially refined sentimentalist who told me that he never gave, because, by so doing, he would, to a certain extent, diminish the misery of the person whom he relieved, and so would no longer be able to feel the horror of the case as fully as before. "I could have spared a sovereign, but I could not lose the luxury of a tear," he said, in—as I think—very touching language. Nay, but why should I conceal it? It was Brogg (C. J.) who thus spoke, and I know he could have spared the sovereign, because he spent a pound in hothouse grapes—of which he was very fond—that very day.

I have anticipated a little again; we are still occupied with one great man's childhood and early youth. Of this time, let me frankly own that I speak only from what I have heard. I describe a period considerably anterior to that which brought me personally acquainted with the subject of our memoir. For what I know of this time then, I am indebted to friends who were in the habit of frequenting the house, such as the Reverend Smear, James Brogg, H. K. Brogg, and others. The reports of this last witness, H. K. Brogg to wit, I have only taken for what they were worth, bearing with his scornful language and perverted views, in the hope of being able to extract useful information from what he said.

C. J., it appears, was not very fond of the society of boys of his own age, nor were they in turn particularly enamoured of him. He was not understood. His philosophy went for nothing, whilst his ignorance in the matter of cricket and rounders, went for a great deal against him. The experiment was tried two or three times of allowing C. J. to visit some young friends who lived a little way out of town, but on his returning the last time with a surfeit from running, a swollen nose from a "misunderstanding," and a bad indigestion, it was decided that the experiment should not be tried again, and this all the more because the rumour reached Mrs. B. that the unappreciative youths whom her darling had visited had pronounced him not only to be a muff, but a fussy little snob.

The nose, and the surfeit, and the indigestion, rendered it necessary that C. J. should keep his bed all next day, which he did, while the Reverend Smear, having a holiday, was able to devote himself to his favourite amusement of painting in oils. His was a light touch and a free pencil, and it is probable that no man ever covered canvas more swiftly, or managed to create such a smell of paint in a house, as our tutor. He did not stint colour either on his canvas or elsewhere, but bestowed it liberally on the furniture and on his own wearing apparel. The subjects chosen by the Reverend Christopher were always remarkably selected, and possessed always some hidden vein of interest which the spectator was expected to understand by intuition. Thus he would paint "A Robber's Cave; the Robbers are absent on one of their marauding Expeditions, and the Chief is at this moment supposed to be sparing the life of a Lady of great personal charms." "The Blasted Heath, just before the entry of the Weird Sisters and Macbeth upon the Scene," would be another of his selections. The Reverend Smear was quite a brilliant amateur, and had sent pictures to the Royal Academy, which body had been so afraid of not placing them as the artist would have wished, that they had never placed them at all.

Mr. Smear was entirely independent of Nature, and could strike off a landscape or human figure in a very short time, without in either case having any object before him to paint from.

The Reverend Christopher's performances, as an artist, are only dwelt upon in this place, because it was in connexion with them that another of those remarkable answers—two of which have already been here set down—was drawn from our hero's lips, or rather, to be more exact, *through* his lips from his brain. The tutor, it seems, had, after considerable labour, succeeded in completing to his satisfaction a picture of an interior, in which was represented, among other things, a window, by which, indeed, the said interior was lighted. This picture had been kept a secret from C. J. while in progress, being intended for a surprise, and, in truth, for a present from the excellent Smear. It was only shown, then, to our interesting young friend when in a completed state. It was not C. J.'s practice, at any period of his life, to give praise to anything. I have never ascertained the reason of this, but I think he conceived that praise produces a relaxation of effort, and that he wished to keep the human race always up to the mark, always doing its best. Be this as it may, it is certain that, on being shown this work of our brilliant amateur, he remained for some time perfectly silent, and when he spoke, it was in the language of censure.

"I don't quite like your effect, Mr. Smear," he remarked.

"Not like the effect! I am truly grieved," said the unhappy artist. "To say the truth, I had hoped that it was in the effect that I had excelled."

"Nevertheless, it is not agreeable to me, Mr. Smear."

"And may I ask in what respect you conceive it to have failed?" asked the humbled preceptor.

"Your window," replied this extraordinary youth, "is too light. It is so bright, indeed, that I am unable to see anything else in the picture."

But here our artist felt so strong in his theory, that he actually made an attempt to defend himself. "Allow me," he urged, with the utmost politeness, "to suggest that this defect—in itself, doubtless, sufficiently to be deplored—is, granting the introduction of the window, quite inevitable. From that window the light falls upon all the different objects in the apartment, which all must necessarily, therefore, be darker than it."

"Must they, Mr. Smear," inquired the pupil; "and why?"

"Because," replied the other, with a certain air of conscious pride—"because the thing lighted cannot be brighter than that which lights it—because the cause that a thing exists must be stronger than the thing which exists by it."

"Because the cause that a thing exists must be stronger than the thing that exists by it," repeated C. J., very slowly. He repeated the sentence to himself once or twice, and then, with leisurely steps, departed from the room.

"Oh, my goodness!" exclaimed the tutor to himself, when left alone, "what have I said? Is it true, I wonder? Yes," he added, presently, in a valiant tone, and repeating the sentence to himself. "It is true. It is rather queerly put; but it is true, and I'll stand by it to the last."

In less than a week, this time—in five days, if the reader can believe it—the theory of our learned man was brought once more on the tapis by his pupil.

Our young friend, for some time before speaking, had been observed by his tutor, who feared there was mischief mallecho, to look repeatedly into the garden. At length the right moment for speaking seemed to have arrived.

"Mr. Smear," he said, "do you see old Adams there, the gardener, and his son, the under-gardener?"

"Undoubtedly I do," was the reply.

"And do you observe," continued our youthful casuist, "how small and short and shrivelled the father is, and how tall and broad and strong the son is?"

The tutor felt, without knowing why, that he was getting on some dangerous ground, but he admitted these things to be so.

"And yet, Mr. Smear, you urged the other day that the cause that a thing exists must be stronger than the thing which exists by it, when here is old Adams, who, as being his father, is the cause that young Adams exists, not com-

parable in strength or in any other respect to his own son."

Inconceivable and matchless sophistry. Here was the unhappy tutor made, as it were, to eat his own words, and that he might do so the more easily, here was his theory made mincemeat of, for convenience of swallowing. And the worst of it was, that all the time the Reverend Christopher felt that this reasoning of his pupil's was entirely false—at any rate, in so far as it bore upon his theory of light—and yet, for the life of him, he could not prove it to be so. To do him justice, he went at it like a lion. He cudgelled his brains. He wrote short essays on the subject in the dead of night, and even sent off letters to certain old friends at the University asking their opinions. But it was all to no purpose. The more he considered, the greater became his confusion. His friends wrote to him that it was a more sophism, a thing that any schoolboy could refute—they didn't do it themselves, by-the-by—and that his own theory of light was entirely correct. There was one of Mr. Smear's correspondents, a head of a house, and a personage with a high reputation for wisdom, who told him that he should have confined himself to this same theory of light, and not have added the clause about the superior strength of the cause to the effect, and Smear did feel that, perhaps, it would have been better if he had done so; but it was all useless now, so he fretted himself into a loss of flesh and a great pallor of countenance, and then, to put a period to his doubts, he got up one fine morning, and, seizing his palette and brushes, toned down the window to such an extent as could in no way be accounted for, except, indeed, by the following addition, which he hastened to make, to the title of his picture: "An Eclipse of the Sun (total) is supposed to be going on outside."

Such was the result of this, the third instance of extraordinary readiness on the part of the subject of this memoir.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER XXXVI. A MEETING.

ALL that long day Fermor had hardly time to think. At the Horse Guards—at the Indian outfitter's—at his tailor's—at his family's. He lived almost in cabs. He saw that Sir Charles who was "one of his relative's oldest friends," and was received with unofficial cordiality. "Glad to do anything for my old elum, Sir Hopkins. Besides, you have had no leave for eighteen months. Severe accident, too. Very well. Leave directions with your agents, and we shall take care of you."

Later he saw his mother, Lady Laura.

The "girls" were in the Park with "Young Piper," riding the coursers of Young Piper. That youth was, as it were, drunk with his infatuation. Lady Laura welcomed her son as though she were an ordinary mother of flesh and blood, gave him a really maternal embrace, and approached nearer to weeping than she had ever done in her life.

"My dear boy," she said, as he told her his story, "I am indeed proud of you. This is a brave, manly, and sensible course. I always said, I admire your resolution and self-denial. I do indeed. Look at that child Piper, that is running after Alicia Mary, like a weak school-boy. But I said all along that you were following out some little plan of your own; and I was not far out." Fermor was a little elated with these praises, and had a sort of dim impression that "all along" her hand directed the course of events. "As for the girl—who, I am told, is clever enough—would you, my dear Charles, leave it to me? Shall I write a kind, friendly note, to say the thing must not be thought of for the present, and that if you are both in the same mind when you return, it can all begin again? That is the proper way, Charles, and a very good test it will be of her sincerity. Young Momboddo went to his regiment at Ceylon under exactly such an arrangement with Lady Frederica Hemans: but, my dear, when he came back, she was Lady Frederica Nugent."

By the evening he had done a wonderful day's business. He met Major Carter by appointment at Starridge's, the correct bachelors' hotel in Bond-street, and they dined together.

At eight they were driving up to the South-Eastern Railway—among the lamps—to go down by the mail to Dover.

"I met," said the major, as they got out, "some common friends to-day. I did not tell you, as it was to be a little surprise for you."

Fermor was glad. He was growing gloomy and morose as he thought of this second night's journey to be taken alone. The major was to stay in London.

"Here they are," said he, as they emerged on the busy platform; and Fermor saw a tall stiff figure in shadow, and a muffled lady on his arm. "Here are our friends," said the major. "Delightful, is it not? Going the same way, too—quite a coincidence."

Perhaps it was. The Carlays were going to the south of France after some days' stay in London. Now, indeed, the gloomy prison-like journey, which he had shrunk from, would become a little blue boudoir, well lit, comfortable, and cheerful. This simple girl would entertain him with her unconcealed worship. The act of making a journey together is a link of sympathy; for there are common troubles and a common undertaking to be got through together.

And so the bell rang, and the night-mail flew down to Dover, past many pointsmen; who had come out of their hutches on duty, and saw the cozy well-lighted blue chambers flit by; in one of which Captain Fermor, his knees wrapped in his rug, was stooping over, talking with great animation of voice and gesture to the lady next him. Then came the cold night air on Dover pier, and the Calais packet, and Paris in the grey of the morning, and the great Boulevards, with the trees and the white palaces, and the men in blouses going to work, and the great door of the great hotel, which a portier, who never slept, swung slowly open. Then the sleepy travellers went to their rest—for an hour or so.

Fermor often boasted of his "iron constitution," and by ten or eleven o'clock was asking to see "his Excellency" Sir Hopkins Pocock, who was breakfasting in a private room of the hotel.

The welcome he received from that high public servant was wonderfully cordial. "My dear, dear boy," he said, "this is right now. I am proud of you. You were made for the service. I knew you would turn out of the

right sort. This is our hard fate. We are obliged to pocket our nicest feelings for the public. Breakfasted? No? Ring, please."

Sir Hopkins was a Frenchman in Paris, and could speak French.

They breakfasted together, spent the day very pleasantly going about Paris, Sir Hopkins leaning on his arm; dined at the Three Brothers café; went to the Opera; and walked after the Opera along the Arabian Nights' Entertainment, translated into the Boulevard des Italiens. Fermor felt pensive among these glories, yet was not disturbed in mind—great dreams of ambition were filling his soul.

In the morning they were gone, flying down through the delightful wine countries to Lyons, seeming to breathe the bouquet of Burgundies and other choice vintages as they passed. Delightfully musical names rang in their ears. They were at Lyons that night, and there was light enough, as they crossed the airy bridge, to see the silver of the Rhône below. They slept soundly through the night, and in the morning were breakfasting at the Empereur, at Marseilles. The hum and clatter of the Cambière was under their windows. The gay parti-coloured sails before the shop windows were fluttering below them. The delightful quay of La Joliette was but a few yards away, where the ships of all countries, and the sailors of all countries, and the merchants and the wares, and the voices and the dresses of all were as gay and bright under the sun as the market scene in Masaniello. The steamer was to sail at noon, as, indeed, were many more steamers, and the commissionnaire was busy in their interest.

"By the way, my dear boy," said Sir Hopkins ("I have sent for the cab), I found a letter here this morning. Sent on, you know. It is rather awkward. That post I spoke of—MacKenzie's—you know."

"Yes," said Fermor, nervously. "Good gracious; nothing wrong, I hope?"

"Oh, it will all come right, I am sure. But, it now seems (I don't understand it, I am sure), the home government claims the appointment."

"WHAT?" said Fermor, breaking out hotly. "Do you mean to tell me that, after all I have done, and been made to do—"

"It is outrageous, as you say," said Sir Hopkins, coolly; "they grasp at everything. The worst part is, they have a sort of a shadow of a title, you see—some arrangement or composition. But, of course, it must be looked into."

"But," said Fermor, pacing up and down excitedly, "this is very odd—looks very odd, sir! I don't understand it at all. I have been led away depending on assurances, and now it seems—I must tell you, sir—it has a very curious look, sir."

"I am not accountable, Charles. You must deal with the home government. It is they who are grasping at your office. 'You know there is time yet to withdraw."

"Ah! it is easy, sir, to say there is time to withdraw. At this place—at this time—after

sacrificing everything on the faith of this—my word—my honour—"

"Your honour! Good God!" said Sir Hopkins, starting up, and nearly overthrowing his chair. "Your honour, Charles! I hope not. O, I hope not. You are not in earnest? No, I see you are not."

Fermor hung his head. It almost seemed the bargain of Faust and his Mentor, done in water-colours.

"Well, I don't mean that," he said. "But, sir, sir," he added, sadly, "how *could* you deceive me in this way?"

"Come, come," said Sir Hopkins, in a friendly, hearty manner, "I allow for this excitement, Charles. It is quite natural, and I respect you for it. There are other things going, and we shall make out something for you. You know," added Sir Hopkins, smiling, "it would hardly do to re-present yourself after all this fuss and esclandre. As the Frenchmen say, ridicule always kills. I declare," he added, looking down over the balcony, "here is the cab. We really ought to pay the bill now. Yes, and put the final touches to the baggage. Will you look after those servants, like a good boy. Allons."

Fermor bowed his head and said not a word. In a few minutes more he was driven away to the quay, and was on board the Indian mail-boat.

The life on board the Mediterranean steamer was epicurean. There were bright days and cobalt seas. Youth was at the prow, and Pleasure at the helm. It was a gay voyage.

CHAPTER XXXVII. FADING OUT.

At the very time that Captain Fermor (who must fill up his day), seated on a camp-stool on deck, was gossiping agreeably to an Indian lady whose husband was below at cards, a dreary desolation and hopeless sorrow was falling on the Manuels' house.

Violet rose up after the shock sooner than her family dared to hope. For a week the very acuteness of the suffering, the excitement and speculation it brought with it, carried her forward. Her sister, worn away with night watching, had whispered desperately, "You must not give way, darling; keep away the thought; fight it off!" For she knew if it once seized on her, the talons would sink deeper and deeper, and never let her go. She said this over and over again, with a sort of despair—almost with menace; and Violet, already stunned and exhausted, actually found herself avoiding the thought by a sort of horror.

It was when she came down again into the old routine of life—white, worn, shrunk, and with a timid, cowering look, as if she expected that the blow would come again from some uncertain quarter—that the change was seen in all its dismal force. They could all have wept over her. And when sister and mother clung about her, and pressed her to them, they remarked a sort of insensibility that did not seem to require consolation.

"I am getting better," she said, looking at

them with a little air of resolution. "I am indeed. I shall gradually learn not to think of it, and then it will wear itself out."

Wear itself out! Alas! There was something busy at *that* work already: thoughts in myriads, seething and bubbling night and day—thoughts of fearful self-reproach, as this business had been the work of her own folly—thoughts of lost happiness, sheer hopelessness, and a cloud of despair in the west, coming on slowly, though now no bigger than a man's hand. With such fierce contests the little delicate frame was wearing, though slowly. The sheath was fretting away. And, besides, there was the struggle of concealment—which was, indeed, the only *purpose* that kept her up—not to hurt those kind, miserable, interested faces that were turned to her a hundred times in the day.

The suffering was, indeed, almost divided. On Mrs. Manuel and the others the blow had fallen so tremendously, the crash had been so bewildering, so unexpected, so wholesale and complete, that they did not even dream of looking back, or think of a remedy. They might as well have been looking back after an avalanche, to where their house once stood. It could hardly be called hopelessness, for they had never dreamed for a moment of hoping. The whole thing was too plain. And now all they thought of was saving what was left to them.

What coldness and almost rawness in the house! As though there was a dusty lonely hearth in every room, and the fires were never to be lighted again. The terrible gauntness of life, that sets in after the death of any one that has been loved, seemed to be present. Yet Violet, with a cheerfulness that absolutely made the hearts of others ache, went higher and thither with what seemed a newly-found zest for the practical duties of life. No one, however, could see how it would end, as yet.

As the Eastport season was now over, and the town itself almost emptied, this little catastrophe came in seasonably enough for the natives. Even in the matter of news it was believed that Providence tempered the wind; but this sending so precious a store did, indeed, seem almost a special deliverance. The good folks were grateful, and the "witnesses" to the scene—unhappily too few in proportion to the wants of the population—were held even in a competitive esteem. Even in communities of greater importance such a business rarely takes place. It was canvassed in many shapes, with eagerness, humour, anger; but in most instances with satisfaction.

Young Brett—as indeed might be expected—showed out in bright and faithful colours. More honest and serviceable devotion could not be conceived. He took it grievously to heart, yet with divided emotions; for he could not bring himself to believe *much* ill of his friend, whom he clung to so loyally. He charitably held to there being foreign influences at work, and to Fernor's being in some sort the victim of destiny. Having arrived, through many painful stages of reasoning, at this conclusion, he was at

liberty to indulge his sympathy. How his heart was wrung for that suffering family! How, with a deeply dejected face, he came there when he thought he could, and as often as he could, with decency! And when admitted he could have wished himself away, he found himself so dull and clumsy. He would have given worlds to have been allowed to show his deep deep feelings in some bold, substantial shape; for what were words, which, after all, he did not possess, and could not buy. He thought faintly and remotely of the gun, so satisfactory in the instance of men. He had always found it the fullest and happiest exponent. Here he saw it was wholly out of place, but the idea in his mind was as of something *analogous* to the gun. This lay on his mind, and the honest child laboured much, and with real distress, at what he called seeing his way, and saw, at last, that he must bound his wishes by mere sympathy.

For Pauline he felt most, and was so earnest that she should employ him in some way, that she felt for him, and did give him, some trifling commission. He would have been proud to have been used, as errand-boy even. His good terrier face, full of sympathy, brought a sort of comfort to the house.

Someway he seemed more suited to the present tone of affairs than John Hanbury, who came too, and tried hard to make himself useful and acceptable. Yet he felt—and it was felt in the house, felt very unjustly too—that he was associated with the late business. His honest face, full of unbounded sympathy, kept alive what all wore anxious to put away, like the vacant chair of a lost relative, or a picture. Such a place should always be filled up speedily, and the picture removed. He could not bring himself to see it in this way, and was, in fact, longing and praying for some opening in which he could prove himself devoted.

Those weeks were indeed an awful time. The weary look in Violet's face almost shocked him. About the twentieth evening of the twentieth day Hanbury found her alone in the drawing-room, and with the best intentions in the world began to offer some earnest good advice, but which he handled clumsily.

It was to the strain of "going away," of "keeping up," of "having a duty to oneself, and the friends who loved her so," with the other platitudes, about as useful and practical as though one were to say in the case of a broken blood vessel, "Do make an effort, and the bleeding will stop." He spoke with a trembling voice. "For God's sake do, dearest Miss Violet. It is killing us all to see the way you look. For all our sakes, *do*, I implore you; and there are some of us who would die for you."

Violet listened a little vacantly at first, passed her hand over her face, tossed her head, and laughed a faint laugh. "Why do you talk of dying?" she said; "pray don't mention the word. We have wonderful dispositions. I will get mamma to go somewhere. I should like a pleasant wafering-place, with plenty of people; something gay, for this is growing dull. So dull,"

added Violet, forcing the muscles of her lips into a smile, "that—that—"

Hanbury was looking at her, wondering and terrified, when she broke out suddenly, covering up her face:

"Oh, I can't, I can't any longer; I can't indeed. Go away, leave me—de—let every one leave me. Oh!" and she was tossing on the sofa, gasping and sobbing in a sort of frantic tempest of grief. Hanbury rushed to the bell, rushed to the door. They were all in the room in a moment, round the unhappy child. Hanbury fled to the open street, beating his forehead as he went. More of the old clumsiness! He could go and drown himself.

Posting along, and not caring where he went, he suddenly saw Colonel Bolstock, Fernor's colonel, riding by; rather, he saw a horse of his own which the colonel had bought. The colonel pulled up: for a little talk about a horse, in the presence of a horse, was like having a cigar. An idea suddenly flashed upon Hanbury: not often had he such inspirations.

"Doing well," said the colonel, looking down the flanks of his horse; "turning out very fairly indeed."

"Tell me," said Hanbury, hastily; "Fernor's gone, I know, but what time did he say he would be back?"

"I gave him ten days' leave," said the colonel; "by the way, there's a horse of his—"

"There, that will do," said Hanbury, turning back; "I must go—"

And he was gone, leaving the colonel looking sourly after him. Here was news indeed; stupid of them all not to have thought of that. After all, Fernor was true—called suddenly away. Above all, that he should be the bearer! This would redeem months of clumsiness.

He rushed up-stairs and plunged into the room again. Violet was still working in hysterical sobbing. The anxious faces were about her.

"I have got some news," said Hanbury, his great eyes twinkling with honest delight. They all started. "Yes, some news," he said, "at least. He's only gone for ten days."

Violet flew to her mother with a cry. "I knew it! I knew it! I knew it!" she almost shrieked. "O, mamma! mamma!" and she fell on her mother's shoulder weeping and sobbing, and laughing again.

Pauline looked at Hanbury doubtfully, almost angrily. "What is this story?" she said, in a half whisper; "you should not have done it. Tell me about it."

"No, no," said he, scarcely listening, but looking anxiously at Violet, "it is all certain—the colonel himself told me. And I tell you what," he added, with excitement, "this night I am going up to London, will find him out there, tell him of our poor darling child, and return with joyful news. Perhaps bring him back! There!"

Pauline shook her head sorrowfully.

He saw opposition, and said, piteously, "Let me go. Do! I must, indeed. It will be doing something."

It did strike Pauline that it would, after all, be doing something. Anything—and the bare expectancy of anything—was better than the fatal waste of hopeless despondency into which they were now plunged.

She said no more, and Hanbury went his way. Alas! if he had only waited to hear that mounted colonel finish his sentence leisurely, he would have been told of a letter which had arrived at the barracks the day before. He had *not* waited.

Hanbury came back when he was ready. Violet was in a nervous flutter, saying over and over again, with a frantic delight, "I knew it! I knew it! What did I tell you all?"

"Don't reckon too much, darling, on these things. How it goes to my heart to damp your spirits—but don't."

"Nor do I reckon on too much, mamma. But now I have a conviction, a certain conviction. I knew it—I said it." (Poor child, she never *had* said it, indeed.) "Dear Mr. Hanbury, my own true friend, you know me, you understand me. I always believed it. Go, now. Don't lose a second. You will be too late, *indeed* you will. He will come back with you if he can; if not, make him write. Be sure you do."

Violet's face was earnest and wild, as she impressed these instructions on him.

"I must go up now," she said, the tired look spreading like a film upon her face, "for I have gone through a good deal lately, thinking over all this. And I have been very foolish; but you *must* own that his going away so suddenly on that night—it looked—"

Her eyes began to swim, and in a moment she was weeping silently and bitterly, but without her old agitation. And her mother had put her arms round her, and said, straining her close, as if some one were about to take her away from her: "My own dear, darling, darling child!"

And thus Hanbury started after this fatal will-o'-the-wisp. He got to London, and was told the truth.

Fernor at that moment was seeing the sun rise on the blue waters of the Mediterranean with fine effect. The packet was listlessly gliding over the sea. It was charming *dolce far niente*.

The little romance he had just passed through came back on him with a gentle pain, not wholly unpleasant. "Poor, poor Violet!" he said, "I feel some reproaches of conscience. I do, indeed. She was *so* gentle. Only for that set about her—they were turning her into a perfect little Machiavelli. Ah! Mrs. Rose, you out so early on deck? Is not this a picture?"

CHAPTER XXXVIII. SICUT FLOS.

ON the day that Hanbury returned to Eastport by the mail train, there came with him, in the railway post-office, a letter in Lady Laura's writing—a letter that she had put off writing, partly from its being a disagreeable duty, and partly from her having other more important affairs to claim her attention. Her hearing of Hanbury's inquiries brought the matter again to her mind. "That girl" had been sending

one of "her set" to look after Charles, perhaps to intimidate, so she went to her davenport and wrote a good practical letter, a little kind in parts, a little cold in others, but, above all, ladylike. After all, said Lady Laura, the girl has some reason to complain. Charles had no business to make a fool of her. With people of her class time is money. "I must say," thought Lady Laura, beginning to ruminate, "we got him out of it very cleverly. If I had been one of the stupid, storming, crying mothers, he'd have been tied to that girl by this time."

She enclosed a letter of "Charles's" directed to Violet, which had been lying in her desk for many days, and sent both to the post.

Hanbury could not bring himself to go near the place for hours after his arrival. A day had been fixed for his return, so he was expected. Violet was flitting about the house anxiously and restlessly, in a wearing agitation. She was, in fact, in a sort of low fever at the moment. Her pale face was seen at many windows looking out wistfully. A mysterious instinct of some terror or horror approaching filled all other hearts in the house.

The post came. With a little swoop Violet was down at the door. With her hot hand she got a letter addressed to herself, and knew Lady Laura's writing. She gasped as she tore it open. The others were on the stairs hurrying after her—but too late. But there was Fernor's letter inside, and, with a cry of joy, she flew up-stairs. "He has written! He has written!" she said. "I knew it! I knew it."

What followed may be conceived—when the first lines of that letter, written ever so tenderly and gently, trembled before her eyes. She had instinct enough to guess it all. That was her last blow. How was it to be expected that so frail a creature should endure so much. The little resolution—the little "manfulness," if it may be called, which she had kept up for the sake of others, had now given way. The waters rushed in.

That night all was changed into a house of sickness. A wretched mother of a wretched daughter, aged and feeble herself, could not endure all these shocks. The low fever present in Violet's hot hands spread violently. The local doctor, the same who had been at their little feast, came and began his work. He did what he could, yet he was not of "the skilful." Yet one of greater skill, even that Mr. Cade whose touch had so miraculously healed the bruised Fernor—(O sweet days! basking in a golden light, and removed centuries away!)—even he could not avail much more. A quiet patient; giving "no trouble," waiting for the moment eagerly.

Two miserable faces, worn and baggard, watched that travelling away spirit-ward: that soft face gradually spiritualised into a shadow. She was as quiet as a child, which indeed she was; so quiet, so calm, that they began to whisper doubtfully to themselves that she was growing better.

One Sunday morning the unskilful local doctor ran in to see her as he went to his church. The sun came in so brightly; the new flowers which thoughtful hands sent every day to fill the room, looked so fresh and gay; and there was such a reflected brightness on Violet's face, and she spoke so softly and calmly, though still with her old weariness, that he was quite confounded. "The turn *has* come," he said below in the drawing-room. "My dear friends, there is *every* hope. I say so seriously. I do indeed. I am the last man in the world that would encourage vain expectations. I tell you, I am astonished at the change."

Grateful eyes were bent on this angel of goodness: full and suffused hearts could not trust themselves to speak. "Take her out," he said, turning to Louis, and pointing to Pauline; "this fine sun will do her good. She is exhausted with all this watching, and it will give you strength."

The faithful maid remained with Violet, who seemed, from her soft half-closed eyes, to be on the verge of sleep. On the last night she had slept a little. The brother and sister went out, too grateful to omit anything they were told to do. They wandered on along a certain green lane lined with trees, a walk the sisters were fond of, for half an hour. They heard the church bells at a distance, and from the green lane could see the congregation in a gay parti-coloured ribbon unwinding from the porch. They then turned to go home, for they were fearful of staying too long, and met John Hanbury on the way. The air was delicious. The three walked together slowly, and in a low voice they told him of the happy change.

When they were not a hundred yards from home, they saw some one running to them and beckoning violently. It was the faithful maid, with a scared and terrified face, the certain instinct of danger. They hurried down to the house to meet her. As she passed them she did not stop, and they only caught the words, "For the doctor!"

They were in the room in a second. A frantic woman was on her knees at the bedside, hardly recognisable as Mrs. Manuel. There was a face lying there, whiter than they had ever seen face before, and a sort of light seemed to flutter over it from the eyes to the lips, from the lips to the eyes back again. Sweet, soft Violet—sweet, soft, persecuted Violet—was drifting slowly away out of the rude rough waters which had been too troubled for her gentle little soul.

As the three came round her, either the sound or the sudden appearance seemed to stay that gliding progress; faint colour floated back into the pale face, the eyelids were lifted slowly; and from those eyes, not yet glazing, stole out gentle recognition. Light hovered about her lips, which seemed to move, either attempting to speak or trying to meet her sister's. Now, happily, the old troubles, the old doubts, the old expectancy—troubles, anguish, all—were dropping fast behind. Pauline stooped over, and the lips

of the two sisters were pressed together. Such little power as there was left seemed to be spent in that kiss, and when Pauline raised herself, and looked down again with dim eyes, she saw a sweet and gracious tranquillity below, and a smiling repose, which told her that that little heart was no more to be fretted by man's cruelty.

All through the fatal and immemorial routine which succeeds a departure such as has been witnessed—through the early blinding stupefaction, the dismal leading away, the horrible sense of solitude, and the tremendous and gaunt desertion which walks in and takes possession of the house like an ogre, with tears after a time beginning to flow in frantic bursts—when in this dismal succession that Sunday was nearly spent, and evening had drawn on, Pauline was seen sitting in the drawing-room, stiff, hard, stony, with strained eyes that had shed few tears, and had an almost fierce look. The faithful maid flitted up to her at times in alarm, and spoke to her softly and soothingly, but she did not hear.

Alarmed, the brother came down with red and swollen eyes, took her hand in his, and with a broken voice tried some of the hackneyed "common forms" of comfort. The faithful servant came and joined him, adding her voice. She, indeed, felt it as sorely as any of them, and her consolation made its way through sobs. But Pauline did not hear them. Her eyes were on some object in the window, where there was no perceptible object.

He grew alarmed. "Come, Pauline, dearest, try. Do speak to us! We all feel and are heart-broken, but we must help each other. We have to live for our dear mother now!"

A flash came into Pauline's face—a flash that made him draw back. She started to her feet. With a sharp, hard tone, they heard now for the first time. She said:

"Yes. We have something else to live for, too. If I had not that to think of, I should die. *There is a murderer to bring to justice!*"

END OF THE FIRST PART OF NEVER FORGOTTEN

DID DICK WHITTINGTON SELL HIS CAT?

SIR RICHARD WHITTINGTON, the Dick Whittington of all schoolboys, has in late years been rather critically situated. Learned men have been, and still are, disputing whether there ever was such a person; whether, if this be answered in the affirmative, he ever did the things which the story-book imputes to him; whether he really came up to London as a poor boy, and go through the marvellous career which ended in the attainment of civic honours. Many other popular stories and ballads are being melted down in the same kind of crucible of criticism.

Many young readers would deem it absolutely cruel to doubt the existence of their favourite

Dick. What is the story? Dick Whittington was a very poor orphan boy, who, plunged in poverty, and hearing that the streets of London were "paved with gold," trudged up to the mighty metropolis, having an occasional lift on the way by the kindly aid of a waggoner. Arrived in London, he soon knew what it was to have a keen appetite without a dinner, and weary bones without a bed; but after a time he obtained admission into the house of Mr. Fitzwarren, a rich mercer in the City. He was employed in some very humble capacity, and was kindly treated by his master and by Miss Alice Fitzwarren, his master's daughter; but the cook, a morose and cross-tempered woman, ill-used him. He slept in a wretched garret, where the rats and mice were so numerous and so troublesome that he could obtain but little sleep; and therefore he bought a cat for a penny, to scare away the intruders. Soon after this, Mr. Fitzwarren engaged in an extensive venture or speculation: sending out merchandise to foreign parts, in order to sell at a great profit. Being a kind man, he gave to all the persons in his service an opportunity of engaging in the venture, promising them the full profits that might arise therefrom. They did so. Poor Dick, having nothing but his cat, sent *that*. When the ship was gone, Miss Alice gave him a penny to buy another cat, and was otherwise good to him; but nevertheless the cook was so cruel that one day he ran away, and got as far as Highgate. Sitting down on a stone by the wayside, miserable and heart-broken, he pondered on his forlorn condition, and wondered what would become of him. Presently he heard Bow Church bells ring out, and they seemed to him to say:

Turn again, Whittington,
Thrice Lord Mayor of London.

He *did* turn again, and went back to Mr. Fitzwarren's, encouraged by the singular notion that had entered his mind. Meanwhile, strange events had occurred. The ship in which Mr. Fitzwarren's merchandise had been embarked was wrecked on the coast of Barbary. The captain managed to gain the favour of the king, and was invited to dinner at the palace. During dinner, rats and mice ran over the table in such numbers as to annoy the captain, who ventured to express his astonishment. The king said that, however much he lamented it, he knew of no means for keeping the animals away. Whereupon, the captain said that the wrecked ship contained a cat which would soon settle the business. The king asked him to bring the cat on the following day. No sooner did pussy see the rats and mice, than she killed several, and scared away the rest. The king and queen were intensely delighted, and offered a casket of jewels for the cat; which the captain, of course, accepted. When he returned to England, he gave an honest account of the affair, and Mr. Fitzwarren handed over to Dick the full value of the casket. Dick now became wealthy. He rose in life as a trader, married

Miss Alice Fitzwarren, was thrice Lord Mayor of London, was knighted, and was member of parliament for the City.—We cannot pretend to tell the story so well as the story-book tells it, but this will serve our present purpose.

Now, some persons say that Dick never existed at all; while some, knowing that Stow and other old writers mention one Sir Richard Whittington as having been thrice Lord Mayor of London, believe in his identity, but deny all the marvellous parts of the story. Others, accepting Dick as having been a real personage, say that he came from Shropshire. Many assert that he came from Staffordshire, some say from Lancashire, some from other counties, but agree with each other in ignoring the cat, the cook, the Bow bells, the King of Barbary, the rats and mice, and the casket of jewels. Lemprière, in his Dictionary, asserted that the story of Dick Whittington is calculated for the amusement of children, but has no foundation in truth. Pennant, writing in 1790, said: "I leave the history of the Cat to the friend of my younger days, Mr. Punch, and his dramatic troupe." Mr. Keightley, in his *Tales and Popular Fictions*, says: "In the whole of this legendary history, there is, as we may see, not a single word of truth, other than this—that the maiden name of Lady Whittington was Fitzwarren."

These doubts have, however, been overhauled in a resolute manner by an antiquarian writer, who leaves no stone unturned to arrive as near as he can at the truth. The Rev. Samuel Lysons, rector of Rodmarton, in Gloucestershire, gave a lecture in his neighbourhood on the subject of Whittington; and this lecture has since been expanded into a volume full of curious information and speculation. Certain it is that Mr. Lysons proves that there *was* a Dick Whittington, and that he was a native of Gloucestershire. During a period of no less than six hundred years, there have been families in the county of that name, varied in its spelling as Whytinton, Whityngdon, Whittyngdon, Whittingdon, Whyttington, Wityndon, Whytindon, Witinton, Whyttington, Wittingdon, Wityngton, Wittington, and at length Whittington. Even Dick himself had his name spelt in many different ways—a fault very prevalent before the invention of printing. Mr. Lysons, by tracing the pedigree in old MSS. contained in the British Museum, finds that Dick was the fifth son of Sir William de Whittington, a Gloucestershire knight living in the time of Edward the Third. There is a William de Whittington traceable as far back as 1240. Dick himself appears to have been born in 1350.

Mr. Lysons assigns reasons for believing that Dick, being a fifth son, poor and unfriended by his family, came to London to seek his fortune; and those who consider what was the state of the roads and the vehicles in those days, will be prepared to credit the narrative of trials and troubles by the way. Arrived in the metropolis, Dick commenced his career as a mere sweeper in the house or shop of a City

trader. As to the trader's daughter being gentle and kind, and the old cook ill tempered and cruel, there is nothing unbelievable in that. The alleged commercial venture of Mr. Fitzwarren was quite in harmony with the custom of the times. There were no consuls, no partners of private firms settled in foreign lands, no system of exchanges to square up international balances. Merchants were accustomed to send out ship-loads of assorted goods under the charge of a supercargo, whose business it was to sell the merchandise in any foreign land where he could find a market, and whose mode of remuneration was such as to induce honesty and vigilance. That Mr. Fitzwarren should send out such a ship-load is quite consistent with the usages of that age.

But how about the cat? Who could have thought of such a thing as Dick sending out his penny cat as a venture; and how could the King of Barbary, even if the story were shorn of ever so much of its marvels, have been induced to give a valuable purchase price for such an animal? Mr. Keightley discredits the Whittington story in this matter, on the ground that somewhat similar tales are to be found in Denmark, Tuscany, Venice, Persia, and South America. Sir Gore Ouseley discovered a similar story of a cat in a Persian poem, written as far back as the year twelve hundred and ninety-nine. Mr. Lysons contends, however, that these tales render the whole subject all the more worthy of attention. That the cat was, in ancient times, a much more valued animal than at present, is certain. The ancient laws and institutions of Howel Dhu, about 950 A.D. (published by the Record Commission in 1841), mention the cat as an animal held in high repute. In one place the price of a cat is estimated in the following curious way: The animal is to be held up by the tail, with the nose near the floor, and as much of the best wheat as would be necessary to completely cover the cat in this position was the price of the animal. By what means poor puss was to be induced to remain in this uncomfortable position while the experiment was being performed, we are not told.

In 1771 the story of Whittington and his Cat underwent discussion at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, in connexion with a paper read by the learned Dr. Pegge; Horace Walpole ridiculed it; and the way in which Foote treated it, in his farce of *The Nabob*, gives us an insight into one of the modes of interpretation adopted at the time. Sir Matthew Mite says: "That Whittington lived, no doubt can be made; that he was Lord Mayor of London was equally true; but as to his cat, that, gentlemen, is the Gordian knot to untie. And here, gentlemen, be it permitted to me to define what a cat is. A cat is a domestic, whiskered, four-footed animal, whose employment is catching of mice; but let puss have been ever so subtle, let puss have been ever so successful, to what could puss's capture amount? No tanner can curry the skin of a mouse, no family make a meal of the meat, consequently

no cat could give Whittington his wealth. From whence, then, does this error proceed? Be that my care to point out. The commerce this worthy merchant carried on was chiefly confined to our coasts; for this purpose he constructed a vessel which, for its agility and lightness, he aptly christened a Cat. From thence it appears that it was not the whiskered, four-footed, mouse-killing cat that was the source of the magistrate's wealth, but the coasting, sailing, coal-carrying Cat."

In an early MS. the value of a cat is stated to be equal to that of a milch sheep with its lamb and its wool; and in another, the property necessary to constitute a "proper hamlet" is said to comprise nine buildings, one plough, one kiln, one churn, one bull, one cock, and one cat. One of the Spanish writers says that eight hundred gold pieces were given for the first Spanish cat landed in Chili, by Almagro, the companion of Pizarro; while another puts down the sum at six hundred, and states that Almagro gave the gold for the cat, not the cat for the gold—a discrepancy which tends to show that there was some foundation for the story. Jean Barbot, in his Description of Guinea, published in 1680, speaks of that country being infested with rats and mice, and of the great consequent value attached to cats. Pennant gives a very marvellous story, to the effect that "Alphonso, a Portuguese, wrecked on the coast of Guinea, was presented by the king with his weight of gold for a cat to kill mice, and an ointment to kill flies, which sum he improved in five years to six thousand pounds." Pennant makes use of this as a weapon with which to knock down the Whittington story, but Mr. Lysons accepts it as being rather corroborative than destructive. Mr. Keightley describes a doorway at Ribe Cathedral, in Jutland, in which is a sculptured alto-relievo of a cat and four mice, commemorative of a poor mariner who made a fortune by the sale of a cat in some foreign land. Mr. Lysons quotes from a work published in 1811, showing in how great estimation cats have at certain times been held. "At Aix, in Provence, on the festival of Corpus Christi, the finest Tom cat in the country, wrapped in swaddling-clothes like a child, was on this occasion exhibited to the admiration of the gaping multitude in a magnificent shrine. Flowers were strewed before him; every knee bent as he passed." This strange and shocking ceremony did not die out till the year 1757; we only notice it in connexion with the fact that cats, from whatever cause, were more highly valued in past times than in the present day.

That Dick Whittington rose to be a distinguished man is now unquestionable. He was made a member of the Mercers' Company in 1392; he became alderman about the same time; mayor, or lord mayor (it is not quite certain at what date the mayor was first be-lorded), in 1398, and again in 1407; member of parliament for the City of London in 1416; lord mayor a third time in 1420, and was knighted some few years before his death in 1423. His

trade was not merely that of a mercer; he was, as Mr. Lysons expresses it, a sort of "Howell and James," dealing in the costliest silks, jewels, and other luxuries. Among the Issue Rolls, under the date 7th Henry the Fourth, is an entry of payment of two hundred and forty-eight pounds ten shillings and sixpence (a large sum in those days) to Richard Whittington, citizen and mercer of London, for pearls and cloth of gold, provided for the solemnisation of the marriage of Philippa, the king's daughter. In Hakluyt's collection of Voyages, a poem called the Libel of England's Policie makes mention of our hero as one of the recognised merchant-princes of the age:

Now I think of the sonne
Of merchandy, Richard of Whittingdon,
That loade sterre and chief chosen flowere.
What hath by him our England of honoure!
And what profit hath been of his riches!
And yet tasteth daily of his worthinesse!

A famous story is told of him as a worthy cit. "During his last mayoralty, after the war with France, he entertained Henry the Fifth and his queen at Guildhall in a most splendid manner, and received from his sovereign the order of knighthood. The king, in order to carry on the war, had been obliged to contract many debts, for which he had given his bonds. Those bonds had been bought up by Whittington to the amount of sixty thousand pounds; and on the present occasion, while the king was admiring a fire which had been made in the room, in which were burned several sorts of precious woods, mixed with cinnamon and other spices, Whittington took out the king's bonds, threw them into the fire, and burned them; thus, at his own expense, freeing the king from his debts. All were amazed at such a proceeding; and the king exclaimed, 'Never had prince such a subject!' to which Whittington adroitly replied, 'Never had subject such a prince!' "We may doubt that the sum was so large as sixty thousand pounds, without doubting the general tenor of the story.

But Sir Richard Whittington was not merely a merchant so wealthy as to be able to assist needy monarchs; he was an enlightened man, who won the hearts of the citizens by the many public improvements he introduced. Whittington made a conduit from Highbury to Cripplegate, where he formed a well, or fountain, for the use of the public. He arched over a spring near the City wall ditch, to keep the water pure for use. He began to rebuild during his lifetime the prison of Newgate, of which an old chronicler, speaking of its previous condition, relates that "hyt was febel over ltel, and so contagious of eyre yat hyt caused the deth of many men." He began building a library for the Grey Friars Monastery in Newgate-street, and supplied it with books (of course MSS. in those days). He arranged with his executors for building a library attached to Guildhall. He repaired St. Bartholomew's Hospital, which had fallen into decay. He

supplied with glass (a luxury in those times) the windows of Guildhall, and paved the floor, which had until then been merely strewn with rushes. He rebuilt the church of St. Michael Paternoster, in Tower Royal, and annexed to it a college for a master, chaplain, clerks, and choristers. He built a chapel adjoining Guildhall. Henry the Fifth entrusted to him a joint supervision, with the monk Richard Hawarden, over the restoration of Westminster Abbey, the nave of which had remained in ruins for many years; and, moreover, in 1415, the king issued minutes of council, directing that the corporation should not demolish any building or wall in the City without first obtaining the opinion of Richard Whittington. There were many of the elements of a great man in all this.

The far-famed cat has taken part in a good many matters relating to the illustration of Sir Richard's career. His executors rebuilt Newgate according to his bequest, and adorned the front with a sculpture of Whittington and his Cat; this remained standing till 1780, though injured by the great fire of 1666. The Mercers' Company had once a portrait of Whittington with his Cat, dated 1536; they have now one of later date. Elstrack engraved a third in 1590. Grainger, in his History of England, says that Elstrack's picture had at first a Death's head instead of a cat; that the public would not buy it; that Elstrack erased the Death's head, and put in a cat; that the print then sold well; and that the Death's head impressions became extremely rare. By far the most curious matter associating Whittington with a cat has come to light since the publication of Mr. Lysons's book. On removing the foundation of a house in Westgate-street, Gloucester, in 1862, there was found a stone sculptured in bas-relief; it appeared to have been part either of a wall-tablet or of a chimney-piece. The sculpture represented a youth with a cat in his arms; and its style and appearance were traced by expert persons to the fifteenth century. Now, the curious point is this: that the house in question can be proved to have been in the possession of a grand-nephew of Sir Richard Whittington, either when Sir Richard was an old man, or soon after his death.—Not conclusive evidence this, of course, that pussy really did visit the King of Barbary's dinner-table; but evidence worth recording, for all that.

The invested estates left by Whittington for the support of "God's House"—the hospital, college, or almshouse established by him—became in time very valuable, and led to the building, in recent days, of Whittington's Almshouses, a large structure near Highgate Archway. In the principal quadrangle is a figure of our friend Dick, sitting on a stone, and apparently listening to the famous Bow bells.

As to the stone itself, Dr. Dryasdust, junior, in Notes and Queries, has recently shown that there have been no fewer than four "Whittington's stones" at Highgate, each claiming to be the original in name, if not in verity. The site of the real ancient stone is supposed to have

been once occupied by a wayside cross, belonging to an adjacent lazaret-house and chapel dedicated to St. Anthony. The old stone (whatever may have been its shape) was removed by a surveyor of the roads in seventeen hundred and ninety-five. Broken or sawn in two, the pieces were placed as kerbstones against the posts on either side of Queen's Head-lane, in Lower-street, Islington; and a few years ago there were Islingtonians who believed that one of the stones still formed the threshold of the hostelry known as the Queen's Head. Stone the second, with an inscription, was placed on the road leading from Holloway to Highgate, shortly after the removal of the first. This second stone was replaced by a third, at the instance of the churchwardens, in eighteen hundred and twenty-one. Finally, stone the third gave place to stone the fourth about ten years ago.

We will continue to believe that Dick Whittington *did* sell his cat.

STONING THE DESOLATE.

THERE are, in certain parts of Ireland and especially upon the Curragh of Kildare, hundreds of women, many of them brought up respectably, a few perhaps luxuriously, now living day after day, week after week, and month after month, in a state of solid heavy wretchedness, that no mere act of imagination can conceive. Exposed to sun and frost, to rain and snow, to the tempestuous east winds, and the bitter blast of the north, whether it be June or January, they live in the open air, with no covering but the wide vault of heaven, with so little clothing that even the blanket sent down out of heaven in a heavy fall of snow is eagerly welcomed by these miserable outcasts. The most wretched beings we profess to know of, the Simaulees and Hottentots of Africa, have holes whereinto they may creep, to escape the heat of the sun or the winter's rages, but the women-squatters of the Curragh have no shelter, there is no escape for them but to turn their backs to the blast, and cover from it. The misery that abounds round our large camps in England is a load heavy enough for us to bear, but it is not at all to be compared to what can be seen daily in Ireland. If one of these poor wretches were to ask but for a drop of water to her parched lips, or a crust of bread to keep her from starving, Christians would refuse it; were she dying in a ditch, they would not go near to speak to her of human sympathy, and of Christian hope in her last moments. Yet their priests preach peace on earth, good will among men, while almost in the same breath they denounce from their altars intolerant persecution against those who have, in many cases, been more sinned against than sinning. This is not a thing of yesterday. It has been going on for years, probably fifty, perhaps a hundred.

Twenty years ago, in eighteen 'forty-four, I remember the priest's coming into the barracks at Newbridge, with a request that the com-

manding officer would grant him a fatigue party of soldiers to go outside and pull down a few booths which these poor creatures had raised against the barrack wall. The priest, I am sorry to say, had his request granted, and at the head of the soldiers, on a cold winter's day, he went out and burned down the shelter these unfortunates had built. At this time it was quite common for the priest, when he met one of them, to seize her and cut her hair off close. But this was not all. In the summer of 'forty-five, a priest, meeting one of the women in the main street of Newbridge, there threw her down, tearing from off her back the thin shawl and gown that covered it, and with his heavy riding-whip so flogged her over the bare shoulders that the blood actually spirted over his boots. She all the time never resisted, but was only crying piteously for mercy. Of the crowd which was formed round the scene, not a man nor a woman interfered by word or action. When it was over, not one said of the miserable soul, "God help her." Five days afterwards I saw this girl, and her back then was still so raw that she could not bear to wear a frock over it. Yet when she told me how it was done, and who did it, she never uttered a hard word against the ruffian who had treated her so brutally. Had any person attacked a brute beast as savagely in England, as the priest had here treated this least of God's creatures, the strong arm of the law would have been stretched out between him and his victim. Yet in Newbridge there was not even an Irishman man enough to take the law in his own hands, by seizing the whip from the priest and giving him on his own skin a lesson of mercy. For it was in Ireland, where even now inhumanity of this sort is encouraged; where dealers consider it a part of religion not to supply these outcasts with the common necessities of life; where the man who would allow one of them to crawl into his barn or cowshed to lie down and die, would be denounced from the altar, and be ordered to do penance for his charity. I need not say what is the result of this refusal of all Christian help and pity to the fallen. It is open noonday immorality and drunkenness, and nightly licentious revelings. When all the vice is out of doors wandering shameless and defiant through the streets of Newbridge, the by-lanes of Cahir, and the purlieus of Limerick, Battovant, Athlone, and Templemore, it becomes far more mischievous than it can be in the cellars and courts of the back streets in Dublin. It is everywhere to be seen, and what renders it less repulsive, is the very tyranny to which its victims are subject, for it is impossible at once to pity and abhor.

I will speak only of what I have seen. Last year I was in Mr. Tallon's shop in Newbridge, when one of these girls came in and asked for half an ounce of tea. She was cleanly and respectably dressed — was perfectly sober and quiet in her demeanour; in fact, from her appearance, I should never have guessed her position. The shopkeeper had weighed the tea and

was about to give it, when, stopping short, he threw it behind him, saying, "No! I'll not serve you." To this she made no reply, but meekly turned and walked away. Surmising what she was at once, I could not help saying, "Good God, do you refuse to sell a fellow-creature the necessities of life?" "Yes," was the answer; "were she dying, I would not give it to her, or any like her." I attempted to argue with him, reminding him that it was only those without sin themselves who should cast the first stone or trample upon the fallen; but he would not listen. I called for the half ounce of tea, paid for it, and following her up the town, gave it the poor creature. Her look of thankfulness more than repaid me.

Yet in Newbridge these people are better off than in any other part of the country; for a charitable farmer who owns some small fields near the barracks, has allowed them the use of a deep dry ditch by the roadside. This they have covered over with some hay and branches of trees, which forms for them a kind of shelter from the weather.

Vastly different is it, however, in other parts of Ireland, where they can get no better shelter than a hedge affords. On the Curragh, for instance, the only protection they have from the pelting rain, the driving sleet, or the falling snow, is a furze bush; and this they are not allowed to erect or prop up by any means into a kind of covering. The moment they attempt to make a roof of it, it is pulled down by the police or under-rangers. I never believed it possible that such misery as I have here seen could be in existence even among savages. Often have I seen these women, as I went to exercise after a severe night's rain, lying by threes and fours huddled together in a ditch, or by the lee-side of a bush. I remember one morning when I was on pass, making my way across the Curragh. Going down from the Grand Stand towards the Camp Inn, I passed a rising piece of ground on my left, under the brow of which the sheep and lambs were cowering together for shelter from the sharp north wind which was then blowing bitterly. I did not observe four women lying in a bit of a hole they had scooped out, until one called after me, and asked me to give her a shilling for God's sake, as they were starving. The sight of them, wet, cold, and perishing from want and exposure, caused me to turn back and give the shilling; and I own that my remonstrance was very feeble even when she to whom I had given it jumped up, saying, "Long life to you! this will get us a drop of whisky," and ran off to get it. The mere prospect of the drink seemed to impart new life to two of them, but the other evidently cared nothing about that which gave her companions so much pleasure. Her eye was languid, her skin hot and dry, her head ached; she was suffering from an attack of fever. I left her, and walking back towards the station, met a policeman, whom I informed of her state, and he promised to get her taken to the workhouse if he could. I discovered afterwards that an

under-ranger had reported this woman's case to the police, and that information of her illness had been forwarded to Naas, when the policeman was told to apply to the relieving-officer at Newbridge. On looking for him, the constable learnt that the relieving-officer came only now and then to Newbridge, and that to find him he would have to go to Milltown. Thither the kindly man did not grudge going, and there he was told by the official that "he would see about it." Next day, finding the poor wretch still neglected, and sinking fast, he had her conveyed in a car to the Naas workhouse, where she died in a few hours after her admission. The head-ranger of the Curragh, Mr. Brown, of Upper Mount-street, Dublin, drew the attention of the poor-law guardians to the neglect of their subordinate, and demanded an inquiry into the matter, for the life of a fellow-creature seemed to have been sacrificed. The guardians refused to inquire, and that in terms which seemed to cast an imputation upon Mr. Brown's veracity. That gentleman appealed to the corroborating testimony of the police and others, and again asked for an investigation, but in vain. He then, mindful at least of his own duty to his neighbour, applied to the poor-law commissioners, and also informed the civil authorities of the facts of the case. The commissioners took no notice of his representations until the Attorney-General issued an order that the relieving-officer should be prosecuted for manslaughter. Then the poor-law commissioners dismissed him from the situation, appointing another man to succeed him, on the express condition, as it was believed, that he should live at Newbridge, the most fitting and central place of residence, and on the direct road from Kildare and the Curragh to the workhouse.

But, on the 10th of September, a woman was brought by the police before Mr. Brown on a charge of drunkenness; it was also stated that she was ill, that she had been obliged to be brought in a car from the Curragh, and that she could not possibly walk to Newbridge. Mr. Brown saw her himself, ascertained that she was very ill, and that neither a poor-law guardian nor the relieving-officer was to be found in Newbridge. Here was another case of utter destitution and illness, which could not receive the prompt attention it required because of the absence of the official whose duty it was to provide a conveyance to take her to the workhouse. A guardian was at length found, and the woman was conveyed to Naas.

On the same day, Mr. Brown reported to the commissioners that their instructions had not been carried into effect, the relieving-officer not being a resident at Newbridge, and he again asked for an inquiry. This course of proceeding did not find favour in the eyes of the poor-law guardians, the chairman stating to the members that "this case was just a little bit of officiousness on Mr. Brown's part," and in that spirit they gave their version of the whole affair to the commissioners, who had written for an explanation.

On the 23rd of that month the commissioners replied to the chief ranger's letter of the 10th, when they stated that the relieving-officer *did* reside in Newbridge, and that they "could not find any subject deserving of inquiry." Mr. Brown would not be satisfied with this kind of reply to a representation of such permanent importance to the poor wretches for whose lives he was fighting, and so, on the 12th of October, he again wrote to the commissioners a long letter, which appeared in the "Irish Times," and contained the following facts: "Three police stations are situated on the Curragh. The constables in charge state, and can show, that they frequently are obliged to go to the relieving-officer as part of their duty. They have invariably gone from the Curragh to Milltown, a considerable round from the Curragh to Naas poor-house. The constables stationed in Milltown stated the relieving-officer resided there. The constables at Newbridge make a similar statement. The county surveyor, in whose employment he is as a road contractor, states that Fitzpatrick, the relieving-officer, lives in Milltown. . . . Mr. Irwin, who is contractor to the poor-law guardians, stated to me in presence of a magistrate, a police-officer, and another person, that his wife had let a bed to Fitzpatrick, and that he took it immediately after I reported him." Mr. Brown concludes his humane appeal as follows: "Gentlemen, permit me, when on the subject of the Curragh, to ask you to draw the attention of the proper authorities to the probable state of the squatters thereon in the approaching winter. They sleep in the open air, little covering over their bodies, no shelter from wet or cold except that of a furze bush. When snow falls they follow the example of the Esquimaux, they lie with their backs upwards, in order to form a temporary support for snow to rest on, which, when accumulated thereon assists to keep them partially warm."

Thus they are exposed all the year round: if it rains for a week they have to remain in it, having the wet ground for a couch, and a few wet rags for a covering. No refuge for them; no pity; no succour. In England the publicans will suffer them to remain by their firesides while their money lasts; landlords will let them rooms while they pay rent; shopkeepers will supply them with goods while they can find money for the articles: but here, in Ireland, they are outcasts in the fullest sense of the term, abandoned, persecuted, spurned. I am well aware that these women are the dregs of society, also that some mistaken Christians will say that "any pity shown to them is at best an encouragement of vice," while others, like Scrooge, will inquire "whether the workhouse and prisons are not still in operation?" To such it is useless to make any appeal. But to those who can feel for the poor and homeless, who, to the best of their ability, attend to the Divine commands to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, and raise the fallen, I appeal for at least a thought of Christian mercy towards

the wretched outcasts, who exist on the Curragh, and around our barracks in Ireland.

It is not only to the female eye that a review of soldiers, with colours flying, drums beating, and bayonets glistening, appears grand and inspiring. The dress of the soldiers, the gilding on the uniforms, the regular step, and the martial bearing of the men, are as if specially contrived for carrying the feelings and good wishes of spectators away captive. Again, when we look at a camping-ground with its white tents ranged in regular order—the flags flying and bugles sounding; the galloping to and fro of mounted orderlies, the passing of general and staff officers with their waving plumes, the turning in and out of guards, combined with the pervading neatness and regularity, have we not all the elements of a spirit-stirring scene? We see then all the pomp and circumstance of glorious war, with nothing of its attendant misery. But there is, as I have shown, around every barrack and camp an outlying circle of misery and sin, a haunting spectre which holds up its withered hands in mockery of all the tinsel. It has never been otherwise; for wherever large bodies of men congregate, these elements of wretched creatures will be found, whose life is a long sin and unceasing misery. It is the old story—a poor girl is attracted by a soldier when the troops come to her town. When he marches away, she leaves all—friends, fortune, and good name—to follow him; little recking of the pains that lie before her. Soon the trifle of money is spent, and then the clothes go piece by piece. When money and clothes are gone, what shall she do? She cannot dash through the ring of scorn already surrounding her, to go home and drink the bitterest dregs of her cup in the rebuke of her own kindred. The man she has followed lovingly and unwisely, had not means to support her; yet she cannot starve. Gradually the outcast sinks lower and lower, till she probably ends her days by the side of a barrack wall, or on the leeward side of a bush at the Curragh. Of the soldiers who should share the blame of this, men are ready enough to remember how they are in a manner cut off from all domestic joys or pleasures, and have as a class very little forethought. Their daily bread is always found them; whether in sickness or in health they need never know what a sharp thorn hunger is. And so, being thoughtless, the soldier does not prevent women from following him from town to town, and from barracks to camp. But if guilty so far, he is not wilfully hard-hearted. I have known many a soldier go to the captain of his troop, and getting a couple of months' pay in advance, spend it on sending a poor girl back to her friends. I know also that for one or two months after a regiment has come to a fresh station there are weekly subscriptions made up among the men of each troop for the same purpose. Therefore I am sure that if a way could be shown for lessening the misery among those unhappy victims, every soldier in the army would give what he could afford. If each man would give a week's pay to commence with, and a day's pay yearly after-

wards, those who had homes to go to, and relations willing to receive them, could be sent home whenever they were willing to return, while the others would at least be provided with a roof to put their heads under.

In India these camp-followers are placed under the care of one of their own sex—a female muccadam, or overseer, who is paid so much a month out of the canteen fund. This is advantageous in more respects than one. The women themselves are comfortably housed; they are obliged to keep their huts in good order, and themselves clean and well clothed; if they misbehave they are punished; in case of disease, they are sent to a native hospital till they recover. This system modified to suit home moralities might be advantageously introduced at our barracks and camps, and would go a great way to stay the spread of disease which fills our army hospitals, and ruins the health of our soldiers. As the hour before the dawn is the darkest, so I trust that, upon the night of these unhappy squatters, the first glimmering of dawn is soon to break. That such distress should exist, and that men should consider themselves most righteous in letting it exist, and walking on the other side with their eyes carefully averted, is but a new form of the old evil, against which His followers were warned as their worst wrong against Heaven by Him who was himself alone unspotted among men.

"THOSE WHO LIVE IN GLASS HOUSES

—SHOULD not throw stones," says the adage. But who ever *did* live in glass-houses before the days of Sir Joseph Paxton or the invention of photography? And why were they expected to be constantly pelting their neighbours? Has the sun necessarily a combative effect upon dwellers in those traps to catch sunbeams?

I, who live in a glass-house all day, am inclined to answer the last question in the affirmative, when aggravated by ugly or capricious sitters. May I therefore, a humble photographer, venture one or two hints to the owners of countenances who desire them to be gracefully and accurately copied, and to those who try to copy them?

In turning over the leaves of an album, we frequently pass our acquaintances without even a nod. How is this? The photograph may be irreproachable as a work of art, and it is impossible to be other than a transcript of what was presented to the camera. How comes it, then, that it is not a likeness? Simply because the original was, at the critical moment, unlike himself. When about to be photographed, one is apt to feel that, like Marshal Ney, the eyes of Europe are upon him—that, according to the position which he assumes, judgment will be passed on his good or bad figure, awkwardness or grace. He wishes to present himself on paper to an admiring, not to a critical, public. A nervous consciousness, moreover, that perhaps a guinea or two is involved in the operation, tends mal-

rially to add to his discomfiture. Trivial as this consideration may appear, it exerts a far greater influence on the expression than most persons are willing to acknowledge, even to themselves. Placed in a position always chosen by the operator (being, to save himself the trouble of rearranging accessories, precisely the same as that which the last sitter occupied), his head screwed into a vice behind, he is told to look at an indicated spot on the wall, and keep still. Thus posed, he regards further operations with much the same feelings of distrust as he would those of a dentist. In imagination, he hears the sharp rattle of the forceps, or the punch. His breathing becomes thicker and quicker as the critical moment arrives, his heart beats audibly against his waistcoat, and a hazy film falls over his eyes. In this delightful condition of mind and body, he is enjoined to "keep quite still, and put on a natural expression;" as if expressions were as easy to put on as gloves. The inevitable consequence is, that he "grins horribly a ghastly smile," the like of which never passed over his features before. Yet both operator and sitter wonder why the portrait is so very unlike.

"I should like to have a landscape background for my portrait, if you please," is a frequent, but most inconsistent request. What can be more preposterous than to see a lady in full evening costume, quietly seated in a luxurious easy-chair, in the middle of a mountain pass, with a roaring cataract rushing madly down within a couple of inches of her immaculate book-muslin? The rugged pinnacle to which she is supposed to have flown (in her easy-chair) being carefully adapted to her satin shoes by a Brussels carpet, from which a tree is vigorously springing. An actor wishing to be represented in some particular character, may, with propriety, require a painted background to assist in the illusion that he is on the stage, before his own painted scenes. Addison remarks, in the Spectator, "a little skill in criticism would inform us that shadows and realities ought not to be mixed together in the same piece. If one would represent a wide champagne country filled with flocks and herds, it would be ridiculous to draw the country only upon the scenes, and to crowd several parts of the stage with sheep and oxen. This is joining together inconsistencies, and making the decorations partly real and partly imaginary."

There are as much individuality and character in the human figure, as in the human face. Every one has some slight peculiarity of gesture and carriage of body, as he has idiosyncrasy of mind. Assuming this to be so, with how much more character is a portrait in some accustomed position endowed than if represented in one to which he was unaccustomed. A right reverend prelate, engaged in the manipulation of three little thimbles and a small pea, or a blind man looking through a stereoscope, would scarcely be in harmony; yet photographs are frequently perpetrated in which ladies and gentlemen are represented in positions, and en-

gaged in employments; equally as foreign to those in which their friends usually see them. The conventional pillar and curtain are becoming intolerable. The conventional Smith or representative Jones, attired in his habit as he lives (say the guinea paletot and the sixteen shilling trousers), seldom has the opportunity of resting his elbow on the base of a fluted column; neither is he often interrupted in the study of his favourite author (one finger between the leaves of the book), seated in a lady's boudoir, radiant with bouquets and toilet bottles, nor with a mass of unmeaning drapery mixed up with his hair, like the hood of an excited cobra.

When two or more persons are taken in one picture, it is no uncommon thing to see them standing without any connexion whatever with each other, as isolated and independent as the statuettes on the board of an Italian image-man; or else, as if desirous of emulating the silver bells and cockle-shells of perverse Mary, celebrated in the nursery ballad—all in a row.

A lady or gentleman, having made up her or his mind to be photographed, naturally considers, in the first place, how to be dressed so as to show off to the best advantage. This is by no means such an unimportant matter as many might imagine. Let me offer a few words of advice touching dress. Orange colour, for certain optical reasons, is, photographically, black. Blue is white; other shades or tones of colour are proportionately darker or lighter, as they contain more or less of these colours. The progressive scale of photographic colour commences with the lightest. The order stands thus: white, light-blue, violet, pink, mauve, dark-blue, lemon, blue-green, leather-brown, drab, curise, magenta, yellow-green, dark-brown, purple, red, amber, morone, orange, dead-black. Complexion has to be much considered in connexion with dress. Blondes can wear much lighter colours than brunettes; the latter always present better pictures in dark dresses, but neither look well in positive white. Violent contrasts of colour should be especially guarded against.

In photography, brunettes possess a great advantage over their fairer sisters. The lovely golden tresses lose all their transparent brilliancy, and are represented black; whilst the "bonnie blue e'e," theme of rapture to the poet, is misery to the photographer; for it is put entirely out. The simplest and most effective way of removing the yellow colour from the hair, is to powder it nearly white; it is thus brought to about the same photographic tint as in nature. The same rule, of course, applies to complexions. A freckle quite invisible at a short distance, is, on account of its yellow colour, rendered most painfully distinct when photographed. The puff-box must be called in to the assistance of art. Here let me intrude one word of general advice. Blue, as we have seen, is the most readily affected by light, and yellow the least; if, therefore, you would keep your complexion clear, and free from tan and freckles whilst taking your delightful rambles at the sea-side, discard by all means

the blue veil, and substitute a dark green or yellow one in its stead. Blue tulle offers no more obstruction to the actinic rays of the sun than white. Half a yard of yellow net, though, perhaps, not very becoming, will be found more efficacious and considerably cheaper than a quart of Kalydor. The cause of freckles is simple enough. It is nothing more than a darkening of the salts of iron contained in the blood, by the action of light. A freckled face is, therefore, an animated photograph.

Still another reason why photographs are not always pleasing, either as likenesses or pictures, is that the time occupied in posing the sitter and securing the negative is not sufficient to allow much thought or care to be devoted to it. It was recorded in a photographic journal, some time since, as a wonderful feat, and lauded accordingly, that one operator had taken ninety-seven negatives in eight hours, just five minutes apiece. Now, as no two individuals ought to be subjected to precisely the same treatment, that is, placed in the same position, or in the same lights, it is certain that fifty at least of those, measured by this modern Procrustes, would be capable of much improvement. Sometimes, for days together, when the atmosphere is foggy, they can do nothing; and, therefore, it behoves them to make their hay while the sun shines.

Now for my trials: "How frightfully stout you have made me," remonstrates a lady weighing, probably, about a couple of hundred-weights; "I have had my portrait painted in oil and pastelle, but neither make me look so stout as you have. I declare I look like some fat, dumpy old woman. I wouldn't let any one see this for worlds. You really must do another." This lady is succeeded by another, of uncertain age, who wants a *carle de visite* taken of her pet dog (it is presumed, for him to distribute amongst his acquaintances). "I should like it taken very nicely, if you please. How do you think he would look best? In profile, three-quarters, or full face?" "I think in profile," replies the artist. "Will you please make him lie down on the table." "Oh dear, he won't be still, I know, on the hard table; he must have a cushion to lie on." A cushion is accordingly procured, and Beauty is deposited thereon. "I think," remarks the young lady, after he is focussed and light arranged, "the other is the prettiest side of his face. Yes," turning him round, "he looks far more intelligent in this position." This, of course, necessitates refocussing and rearrangement of the light. Just at the moment of exposure, Beauty jumps off the table. No amount of whistling or coaxing, no startling announcement of "rats" or even "cats" will induce him to keep still for one second. Half a dozen plates in succession are spoiled, until he takes it into his intelligent head to go to sleep, when a good photograph is at last secured, and the lady, with many apologies for having given so much trouble, bows herself out. She is succeeded by two young gentlemen just returned from school, who, beyond making each other laugh, putting themselves

into absurdly grotesque positions while the operator is attempting to focus, and asserting that "it's no end of fun being photographed" (which the obtuse operator doesn't seem to see), conduct themselves tolerably well, and in a few minutes are dismissed. The next visitor is a young mamma with her infant. "Do you think you can take a good likeness of this child?" she inquires; "she has just learned to walk, and I should like her to be taken standing."

"But if she has only just learned to walk," suggests the artist, "I don't think she will be able to stand still."

"Oh yes, I am sure she will," returns mamma. "Do, please try; I should so like to have it."

The artist cannot withstand this appeal, and, against his better judgment, attempts and fails; for the sweet little cherub is unsteady on its "pins," and is much given to "flopping" at unseasonable times. Mamma is at length compelled to do what the artist recommended in the first place—to take the baby on her lap.

Then there is the deaf old gentleman, who can't hear when he is told to keep still; and the communicative young lady; and the funny person, who wants to be taken with his fiancée, and when he has moved talks about missing his face, and facing his miss, and tells the operator he may fire away again, he has lots of time.

It is now about four o'clock, and the artist, who has in the course of the day travelled about twenty miles, in rushing in and out of the developing-room, arranging sitters' dresses and accessories, regulating the light, &c., with the thermometer standing up amongst the nineties, has not had an opportunity of taking any refreshment, or sitting down for one minute. Yet he is expected to be polite and conciliatory to all, never to lose his temper, and must attempt, at least, to strike up a cheerful conversation with each sitter, so as to get an "expression."

Can you understand, then, that some of us who live in glass houses do occasionally desire to express our impatience by some strong demonstration?

REMINISCENCES OF BROGG.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

THE remarkable subject of this brief memoir passed, in due time, from the shelter of the paternal roof to that afforded by a set of rooms in the immediate neighbourhood of Cephas College, Cambridge. He was accompanied, of course, by the Reverend Smear, in order that he might have some friend and protector at hand to support him in this first contact with the rough hard world. C. J. did not boat, nor did he smoke. He did not give, or go to, wine-parties, nor play at billiards, nor indulge in jokes at the expense of his masters. He did not hunt or get into debt, and finally, strange to say, he did not take a degree!

It was in the merest trumpery formalities that he broke down, mere inability to answer certain

questions *at the moment*. The information required for answering those questions he was of course possessed of, but he required time, and time was not given to him. Indeed, he sent in his answers some days after the examination, but this proceeding did not produce any effect in reversing the decision of the Dons, and C. J. Brogg was lucked.

But this heroic youth was in no sort dashed by this event, no not a jot. "When I see," he observed to his tutor, "the sort of persons who pass through this ordeal with what is called success, when I observe the frivolity and the superficiality of their minds, and the slightness of their characters, I cannot help feeling that it would be wrong in me even to wish for a share in such triumphs as theirs." And with that C. J. went down from Cambridge, and set himself once more to study philosophy under the care of the Reverend Christopher Smear. His reception at home was enthusiastic on the part of his mother. Mr. Smear informed this excellent lady that her son had been an ornament to his college in particular, and to the University in general, and was expected to do great things. The mere fact of the plucking, he added, indicated simply nothing. It was a simple question of nerves. A man with a shallow intellect and plenty of brass would take a high place, while another of profound thoughtfulness and great information, but of a modest and retiring nature, would be inevitably thrown over. "Look," the tutor would remark, "at the men who took degrees, ay, even high honours, and see how many of them never did anything to distinguish themselves afterwards." The good lady was entirely convinced by these and the like arguments, and said that she was only sorry her son had ever been to the horrid place; but Mr. Brogg senior, on the other hand, thought less highly of his son than ever, and muttered, in the retirement of his study, that "he'd always said they'd make a fool of the boy."

And now, it having been decided that the Bar was the profession best calculated to develop the powers of this extraordinary young man, we find him enrolled a member of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, and pledged for five years to consume from time to time such store of potent joints and fiery port as might be expected to sustain him under the laborious study of the law, and bring him in time to the attainment of its highest honours. But this long period could not of course be devoted entirely to law studies. Literature—glorious, consolatory literature—was called in, that it might call out the Genius of Brogg, and certain works issued from his pen, which, if they could have got a fair hearing, must have brought their author both reputation and profit. But they did *not* get a fair hearing. There seemed to be a conspiracy against Brogg on the part of both editors and publishers, and the different members of both of these classes would return his MSS. with thanks, and polite intimations that they "wouldn't do."

And yet they were beautiful works too, for I have seen them. The essays were founded on the highest models; they were extremely severe in style, and everything in the shape of incident or illustration was carefully excluded, as were all original sentiments of opinions that might startle by their novelty. Nor were his attempts at fiction less admirable. In these his forte was reflection. Everything that happened—and it was part of his system that very little *did* happen—gave rise to reflections, and these, again, to other reflections, so that each work was, in fact, a great collection of wisdom combined with a certain amount—quite as much as was good for the reader—of fictitious interest.

Of his Play that he wrote, and how it was not liked, and,

Of his Poem that he wrote, and how that was not liked either,

I might, and perhaps ought to, treat here at considerable length. But how can I do so? It is impossible; for when I think of the manner in which these great works were dealt with, I lose all restraint and patience. The Play, a genuine Tragedy of the Roman time, and in which not a soul was left alive at the fall of the curtain, found its way into and out of every theatre in London. None of the managers would hear of it. They wrote complimentary letters, and said that it was a very fine work, and that its author must be a man of unquestionable genius, but it was not "suitable"—that was the phrase—for dramatic representation. So also with the Poem. Profuse admiration on the part of the publishers now. Letters of the most gratifying character. The Poem possessed, said the publishers, qualities rarely to be met with in modern times. It was worthy of the Augustan age. It was heroic—classical. But, alas! this was a period when there was no demand for these high-class works. The public taste was debased and ruined.

There was a public, however, for these great works in C. J.'s own house. Friends and relations were there to whom, on the occasion of certain evening séances, these productions were read aloud by the gifted author himself. All sorts of frequenters of the house would attend on these occasions, and as they were all men of genius, it made the praises which they lavished on these works the more precious to our illustrious friend, and to those who were interested in his welfare. And it was not the language of flattery which reached the young author. Praise, no doubt, but not flattery. On the contrary, some of the elder and more distinguished of his listeners would, not unfrequently, object to passages in his work, and even suggest alterations. The great Mr. Bolster, for instance, on a certain occasion when he formed one of C. J.'s audience, actually stopped the reading quite abruptly.

"I don't like that line," he said. "There's a word wrong." I must mention, that he had just before been looking over the reader's shoulder.

"Ah," said C. J., looking up with an amiable smile. "What word's that?"

"Why," continued Bolster, "in that exquisite description of the sheep-shearing, you have a line:

And fleecy terror holds the timid flock.

I don't like 'fleecy,' quite," continued the great authority, "and, at the risk of offending you, I will venture to say that the line would have been better thus:

And *sheepish* terror holds the timid flock."

"Bless my heart!" ejaculated C. J., almost with terror, "why, I have the word here erased."

"You don't say so?" cried Bolster. "Then, if I were you, I'd restore it."

It was thus that C. J. received suggestions, willingly, cheerfully, and without grudging.

I cannot help mentioning here a tribute of a very graceful kind, which was paid by one who knew little of the world and its ways, to this very same poem. In the very same part of the work to which allusion has just been made—in the portion, namely, where the admirable sheep-shearing scene is described—there occurs a passage which tells a sad story of how one of the sheep, running away from the shearers, falls into the river and is drowned by the weight of its own wool. I will not do this extraordinary and pathetic passage the injury inseparable from partial quotation (the volume must one day be in the hands of the public entire), but I will simply say that the pathos and beauty of the description are entirely irresistible.

This scene, then, was being read one evening to a small circle of friends and admirers assembled at Poets' Corner, which was the name bestowed by Mr. B. on the villa where the family resided, and among the company was a young lady who had newly arrived from the country to stay in the house. She was not "out," she was innocence itself; an unsophisticated heart, if ever there were one in this world. As this sweet child of nature listened to the tale, her feelings were so powerfully acted upon that it became at last no longer possible for her to keep them under any sort of restraint. She burst into tears, and at length, in a voice rendered almost unintelligible by sobs, she cried aloud: "Oh, Mr. Brogg, if you're going to let it be drowned tell me, that I may leave the room." Our friend motioned her to remain, and then and there, and with the power of an improvisatore, altered the catastrophe of the poem, and saved the life of the sheep.

The alteration has stood ever since. For C. J. Brogg was of opinion that the cry of that young girl's heart was really but an expression of the public voice, a manifestation of opinion which every one possessed of a heart would not fail to endorse.

And these are the works which cannot reach the public, because no publisher will undertake them. Let us remember the kind of productions daily cast forth upon the book-market, and master our indignation as well as we can.

In that circle of choice spirits of which the society at Poets' Corner was formed, it was the happy privilege of our illustrious friend to find appreciation and sympathy. Indeed, it was a pre-eminently appreciative and sympathetic circle. It was a hothouse for the rearing and developing of genius. The gentlest and mildest zephyrs, only, breathed within its precincts, and the rough disturbing breezes outside could never get in to chill the constitutions of those sheltered individuals who were fortunate enough to have access to this haven of rest; and it was curious to see how each of these sheltered ones appreciated all the others, and was in turn understood and admired by them. It was curious, and at the same time very delightful. The society was chiefly composed of persons devoted to art in some one of its forms, and for the most part these were men of whom the world knew little or nothing. They flew too high to be easily followed by a heavy-winged public. Their language was Hebrew to the multitude. They were caviare to the general; but they understood each other. I don't know that it was what would be called an amusing society, they were all so grave, so earnest, and so disgusted with human folly and ingratitude.

And besides the caviare, there were the devourers of the caviare. The house was frequented by a class of persons more largely represented in this country than might be imagined, who worship the arts and their professors, though themselves engaged in pursuits of a widely different sort. These were what are called City men. Gentlemen whose pursuits were connected with commerce and the money market, and well to do in their affairs. They all knew Brogg senior, of course, meeting him daily in the City, but it was not that eminent financier whom they visited when paying their respects at Poets' Corner. They came to worship at the shrine of Genius. They came to hear a new poem from the pen of C. J., to listen to a recital by some young lady with a taste for the stage, or to examine, and very likely purchase, some work of pre-Raphaelite art executed by one of the misunderstood geniuses already spoken of as finding peace and refuge within the walls of the Brogg establishment. Strange characters these men of business, with tastes so at variance with their ordinary pursuits. Successful men, too, who do their work well, and yet are so little arrogant in consequence of their prosperity, as to allow the children of Genius to ride roughshod over them, and treat them as nothing better than poor degraded lumps of earth, made to be of use to more elevated mortals, and for no other purpose whatsoever. And to see how these men would themselves fall into this same view, and, when particularly ill used, would say: "Grampus is in force to-night. He's treble himself, I tell you." This—remembering what these gentlemen were—was certainly a wonderful sight. Small thanks would our City man get for the fat cheque which he handed over to the grasping Grampus, who, however, had reasons for being specially glad to

get it. "There are thousands of cheques in the world," Mr. Grampus would say to himself, as he carelessly thrust the document into his pocket, "but how many works by Grampus? If this City man does not go into the City, there are plenty of others who will do just as well instead, but if I don't sit down to my easel, who besides can produce Grampuses?" This was no doubt very true; but then, on the other hand, our genius should have remembered that not everybody, even in the City, would be prepared to exchange cheques for Grampuses.

Never mind. Our City man seemed to like being treated with contempt. There is much to be done by bullying in this world, perhaps more even than by cringing. When this patron of art got snubbed at every turn by Grampus and others of the like nature, it showed him simply what a tremendous set of fellows he had got among, men so exalted that they could afford to look down upon him—a man looked up to in the City by everybody. Yes, Grampus and Co. were tremendous fellows, and it was no end of a privilege to be allowed to associate with them on any terms. For the City men never entered into any competition with the geniuses. They listened, but talked little, nor were they unwise in so doing. The geniuses were of the irritable sort, and would cut up rough at a moment's notice. On one occasion, for instance, when Mr. Brown, of the Stock Exchange, happened to state in conversation with a friend, but unhappily within hearing of Grampus, that Mr. Brogg senior "was decidedly one of the very first men of the day," on this occasion, I say, he was laid hold of and gored and trampled upon by Grampus in a most merciless fashion.

"Hear this man," cried Grampus to some of his colleagues who had not been attending. "Here is the old leaven appearing. Here is an instance of what Bacon says, that 'nature is often hidden, sometimes overcome, seldom extinguished.' Here is Brown, totally unable to extinguish his nature, falling back into his normal condition of money-worship. The feeling has burst from him at the mere mention of one of the high-priests by whom the worship is conducted. Our worthy host here he designates as one of 'the first men of the day.' Mark our friend's enthusiasm. The subject is one which he understands, and which appeals to his money-grubbing tastes. Brown, I am ashamed of you! And this after all the pains that have been bestowed upon you in this very house. With all your pretended taste for better things, I believe that your heart's in the City at this very moment."

It entered the mind of C. J. Brogg to give an entertainment of a somewhat novel kind, a sort of social conference of all the most remarkable men of the day, in order that they might give their opinions on the different subjects. It was so far in favour of C. J.'s project that most of these distinguished persons had some knowledge of the house, having

been invited by Mrs. Brogg on many previous occasions. Out of this good lady's invitations, one out of eighteen—on an average—had been accepted by these great men, so that nearly all of them had at one time or another found his way to Poets' Corner, and it was a curious thing that not one of these illustrious ones ever visited that abode of intellect more than once. It was thus the happy privilege of C. J. to be able to invite some of the most remarkable men of the age to join his social conference, not merely as one great man claiming a sort of fellowship with another, but as, to some extent, personal acquaintances also. It was with a feeling of conscious pride that the Reverend Smear, who undertook to put the letters of invitation in the post, glanced over the remarkable names inscribed on the envelopes, and he could not help speculating as to what would be the feelings of the post-office keeper as he observed the names in stamping the letters.

Of course the conference was not to be entirely composed of these eminent individuals. Other privileged persons, private friends, and acquaintances, were also invited, and these were mostly informed what sort of company they were likely to find themselves in. "Dear —," C. J. would say in writing to his more familiar friends, "Buster, the great engineer; Thunderson, the poet; Savile Rowley, the doctor; Shammy, R.A.; and some other men of mark are coming here on Thursday next, to discuss matters of general interest. Will you join us at half-past eight? Yours, C. J. BROGG." And the reader may here remark that our great man feels so confident as to the readiness of his fellows to join the conference, that he does not say that he has "asked" Buster and the rest, but that they are "coming." And what can be more natural than that he should so speak? What an opportunity was this for Buster and the others for learning each other's opinions and profiting by them. It was to be a meeting of flints and steels, so to speak, and what volleys of sparks—sparks of the fire of genius—might not confidently be looked for.

They did not all come, it is true. Those who did, however, found great preparations made for them in the shape of tea and picnic biscuits, and they found, moreover, C. J. Brogg standing in the middle of the room holding what appeared to be several letters in his hand, and wearing an expression of as much annoyance as was compatible with the character of a philosopher and man of genius. The members of the conference, up to half-past nine o'clock, consisted of Grampus and the geniuses under his command, the men of commerce, admirers of the above, the Brogg family, and those outsiders who had been invited specially to meet Buster and Thunderson, and a long list of individuals bearing names equally distinguished, but who were not present. The company did not converse, or rather "confer," and everybody looked towards the door incessantly—everybody, that is, except Grampus and friends. They didn't care

who came. They were used to geniuses, for were they not continually in the habit of meeting each other?

With the exception of Dr. Calix, the botanist, no one of the illustrious personages who had been invited put in an appearance. The doctor himself did not prove much of an addition to the company, by-the-by, for he simply got away into a corner and stared speechlessly.

The greater part of the company wore now a discontented, and perhaps almost vindictive air, feeling evidently that they had been drawn together under false pretences. Some, however—and these were they who were in the habit of looking on the bright side of everything—sought to console themselves with Calix, in the absence of other celebrities. "Calix is here," they would say; or, "Seen Calix? That's he leaning against the folding-doors; massive skull— isn't it?"

Meanwhile, the distinguished individual with whom we are mainly concerned had thrice said—standing in the middle of the room—"My excellent friends," before he could succeed in making himself heard. As soon, however, as it was discovered that he was speaking, there was an instant, and perhaps disconcerting silence, and the words of C. J. sounded with almost awful distinctness:

"We had a purpose in view this evening," he said, "which must not wholly be lost sight of. We are assembled with an object, and that object is to master some difficulty, to clear up some doubt, to throw light on some dark place, and all this by means of that powerful agent—Discussion. Now, who is there that can give me something to discuss? Who is there that, racked with doubt, will make public the subject of his uncertainty, and abandon it to us for purposes of dissection?"

Who was there? That was the question. Apparently, there was nobody. Everybody looked about him briskly, as possessing a mind in which neither doubt nor misgiving had a place, or glanced suspiciously at his neighbour, as much as to say, "You used to be a sceptical, hesitating sort of fellow, come, I should think this sort of thing was rather in your line, I have no concern in it at all." In fact, the effort of that brief address of C. J.'s was almost supernatural. Doubt and uncertainty might no longer have existed on the earth. One would say that they had disappeared as the toothache would if a dentist (forceps in hand) should arise in a certain society and say: "Is any gentleman or lady present troubled perchance with an aching tooth?" It was a wonderful and edifying sight to behold an assembly of such magnitude, and to observe that every man among them had his mind made up upon every subject that could agitate society.

A dead silence then succeeded that address of C. J.'s, which no one present seemed in the least degree disposed to break, till at last a facetious gentleman, as if with a view of starting some subject on which it might reasonably be expected

that doubt would exist in the minds of those present, said inquiringly:

"Church-rates?"

"Yes, my dear friend," replied C. J., catching at a straw. "By all means. Do I understand that your mind is in an unsettled state on the subject of church-rates?"

"Oh dear no, not at all," put in the other, rapidly. "It only occurred to me that it might be a topic on which some other gentleman present might perhaps like to hear an opinion."

"Very good idea, very good indeed," replied the originator of the conference, grateful of any assistance. "Is there any lady or gentleman," he added, looking round with a soothing smile, "whose mind is at all unsettled on this interesting subject?"

Again the same extraordinary unanimity of opinion. A proud expression of settled, unshakable conviction of all fear. A short gentleman, sitting forward with his hands upon his knees, and so looking round among the company from face to face, at length expressed himself as the foreman of a jury might:

"I think we seem to be all agreed? Is it not so?"

A low marmur of assent ran through the assembly.

"Yes," said the foreman, "we are all agreed."

"But as to what?" urged Mr. Brogg, who, perhaps, thought he saw a prospect of some discussion on the point in question.

"As to the church-rates," replied the foreman.

"Yes," urged C. J.; "but *how* are you all agreed? What view do you all take?"

"Why, *the* view, sir, of course," replied the foreman, in something of a reproachful tone. "The orthodox view."

"I don't know exactly," said Mr. Grampus, striking in at this crisis, sitting in an irreverent attitude, with his hands in his pockets and his legs stuck straight out before him; "I don't know what the orthodox view may be, but, as far as I am concerned, I beg to say that I disapprove of church-rates, and, I may add, all other rates whatsoever, as at present collected. I say that they are collected in an offensive and ungentlemanly manner. I don't like, and I don't believe any gentleman can like, the style in which these rates and taxes are applied for. I am 'hereby to take notice,' and 'hereby to declare.' Why don't they speak civilly—why don't they say 'please'? Is there no such expression in the language as 'You will have the kindness to observe,' or 'Allow us to call your attention'? I am not a rogue, why am I treated as if I were? Why am I threatened with fines, and terrified with a hand in a frill pointing to incomprehensible, but always threatening, passages, printed in red ink? I pay my taxes"—this must have been a statement made in a moment of oblivion, or adduced simply for the sake of argument, Mr. Grampus being really in the black books of every collector in his neighbourhood—"I pay my taxes; when I receive the paper applying

for them I intend to pay them; why am I, then, addressed in odious, suspicious, menacing terms from the first? It is abominable, and I don't understand it, and my only consolation is to give all the officials connected with the business all the trouble I possibly can, by *not* 'taking notice,' and *not* 'hereby declaring,' or in any other way coinciding with their offensively expressed demands." And Mr. Grampus leaned further back in his chair, and thrust his hands further into his pockets, and inquired of Mr. Smear, who sat near him, whether "that was not doing *his* part in the conference at any rate?"

Mr. Grampus's part in the conference gave a great deal of offence. The little foreman expressed himself that such opinions were mischievous and un-English, and these words, especially the last, were muttered in all directions by different members of the society. Great offence was given, and, in short, the "sensation" was so general, and began at last to be so fully expressed (gaining in intensity every time the word "un-English" was repeated), that poor Mr. Smear determined to try the plan of making a division by starting another subject for conference, and said, no less than seven times:

"I have sometimes thought that were we a little less uncertain on the subject of apparitions than we are, it might add to our comfort and sense of security."

"Apparitions?" Pooh! Nobody wanted to discuss apparitions, and that sort of thing. It was a question of church-rates, and sentiments had been uttered in that room which were both mischievous and un-English. It was no time to talk of apparitions.

There is no telling how far this discussion might have gone had it not happened that at this moment there was a very opportune arrival of refreshments in the shape of pic-nic biscuits and negus, towards which creature-comforts so immediate and general a rush was made, that church-rates and apparitions were alike forgotten. After this, Mrs. Brogg, who knew well what she was about, went to the piano, and half-recited, half-sung, one of Thunderson's poems set to music by herself.

That night, when the last genius had taken his departure, C. J. took his old tutor aside, and said, "Smear, I am uneasy in my mind. Circumstances are beginning to shake me as to my belief in myself. I am beginning to doubt whether I am the remarkable person you would, in your kindness, make me out to be."

The curate hastened to reassure him in the most earnest manner, and in the most eloquent language.

"I don't know, Smear—I don't know," answered this great but humble-minded man, and a cloud of melancholy was on his brow as he spoke.

"There are many things which I don't understand. I should have thought, for instance, that I should have got more letters every day, that my works would have been more sought after,

that I should have received communications requesting my co-operation from all sorts of learned societies and learned men both at home and abroad. I don't understand it, Smear—I don't understand it at all." And the subject of this memoir took his bedroom candle and retired in rather a melancholy frame of mind to bed.

CHAPTER III.

It was about this time, then, that Mr. Brogg became connected with an association founded on the sublimest principles, and bearing the comprehensive name of the **MUTUAL UNION**. Of this society, the humble individual who writes this memoir was the honorary secretary; nor must I omit to state that it was owing to my connexion with the Mutual Union that I came to enjoy the greatest privilege of my life—the friendship, namely, of C. J. Brogg.

We were a local society, all the members belonging to the Tyburnian or Bayswater district, and it was in a situation equally easy of access to both these neighbourhoods that our meeting-room was located. It was spacious and airy, and there was a clock, and a bookcase, and a map, and there were cane-bottomed arm-chairs, and a long table with a green cover, and an inkstand and blotting-book placed before each member, and such pens as I never saw anywhere else in my life. Inasmuch that one gentleman, our youngest member, who never spoke, nor apparently took any interest in our proceedings—sketching profiles in his blotting-book throughout the entire evening—this young gentleman, I say, being asked by a friend why he belonged to us, made answer in these few and simple words: "Such jolly pens!" They were exceedingly expensive pens, and nobody made any use of them except the before-mentioned profile-drawer (who would get through his three or four in an evening) and the Reverend Mr. Smear, who was one of us, and who always took copious notes of everything that transpired at our meetings, and put down all that was said in a peculiar short-hand of his own, which neither he nor anybody else was ever able to read.

It was owing entirely to the agency of the Reverend Smear that C. J. Brogg originally became a member of the M.U. Mr. Smear had been for some time one of us; ever since, in fact, he had ceased to be C. J.'s tutor, and it was in consequence of the report given by the reverend gentleman of the extraordinary merits of his former pupil that we took a step very unusual among us, and absolutely went the length of soliciting Mr. Brogg to become a member. Mr. Brogg only stipulated that his brother James should be admitted along with him, and this being at once joyfully acceded to, we had soon the exquisite gratification of enrolling the great man among our members.

We were essentially a Mutual Society. Our objects were mutual enlightenment, mutual encouragement, mutual bringing together and dovetailing, as it were, of natures. Our meetings took

place twice a week, on Tuesdays and Saturdays. We had tea and muffins at eight, and there was a very large bottle of water on the table in case any of the members should afterwards require additional refreshment. Sometimes we talked, sometimes we made speeches, sometimes a member would read us a paper on some subject with which he was acquainted. Sometimes, again, we debated on general topics, the subject for the evening chalked up on a black board thus: "Whether of the two was the greatest man, Napoleon Bonaparte or Alexander the Great?" Or, "The madness of Hamlet, was it feigned or real?" Never did anything bordering on what is called an "unpleasantness" take place at any of our meetings. Were we not mutual?

I may here mention, in order to disarm any ill-disposed person who might otherwise think proper to bring the circumstance up against us hereafter, that some obscure individual who was invited to spend the evening with us, went away and spoke of us afterwards in terms of great disparagement, giving us the preposterous name of the "United Bores."

I have said all that is necessary concerning the structure of our club, and I will only add that our expenses were very few, and our subscription, in consequence, extremely low. It was a curious thing, by the way, and a circumstance in every way gratifying to remember, that C. J. evidently understood from the first, and without requiring explanation, that he was to be an honorary member, and never once insulted us by so much as the offer of a subscription. One of our members—our least amiable one—Mr. Carpeu, did ask on one occasion, in the absence of Mr. Brogg, whether that gentleman had been originally proposed as an honorary member or an ordinary one, but it was universally agreed that the question was wanting in mutuality, and it had to be withdrawn in consequence.

That was a remarkable day in the history of our Union on which the great C. J. Brogg was for the first time encircled, so to speak, by its mutuality. To me, indeed, the occasion was one of a special kind altogether, for on that day was laid the first stone of a structure which was to prove of an enduring sort—a structure both useful and ornamental—I mean the friendship which was to exist afterwards between Brogg and myself, and whose commencement dated from that very evening when Mr. Smear introduced his once pupil, now friend, to the members of the Mutual Union.

It was evening. We were all assembled round the green board, the hands of the clock pointed to nine o'clock, when the sound of footsteps was heard without, there was a knock at the door of the room, and in another moment the form of C. J. Brogg, as elsewhere described, stood before us. The excitement was tremendous. We all started to our feet and hastened to rally round our new member, and greet him with words of friendship and welcome. All, I should have said, except Mr. Sideways, who was at the very crisis

of a profile, and who waited to finish it before he rose to make his bow to the illustrious neophyte. C. J. was accompanied by his brother, an agreeable intelligent person no doubt; but he sunk, as might be expected, into total insignificance by the side of his brother. Not but that as time wore on he soon won golden opinions, and was liked by everybody—but then his brother—who could think on this occasion of anybody but C. J.? The Reverend Christopher Smear seemed to take possession of his former pupil from the first, looking round upon us whenever Mr. Brogg spoke, as with a sense of proprietorship and responsibility.

It was one of our conversational or debating evenings, and by Mr. Brogg's desire we all went at it just as we usually did, and as if he were not present. It was my business to say a few words by way of making a beginning, and then anybody spoke who liked. I merely had to announce the subject, and set it going, a performance which I went through on this particular occasion with a particular trepidation and nervousness. We had found it needful to adhere to certain formalities in our debates, and one of these was that no gentleman was ever alluded to by name. "The gentleman occupying the second chair on the left," or "my honourable friend on the third chair right," these were the appellations by which we were called, and I think it helped to preserve order, or, in other words, to keep up a feeling of mutuality. Mr. Carpeu, by-the-by, who generally differed from the rest of us, had a wooden chair of his own, by which he was distinguished when alluded to in debate.

"The National Expenditure—is it ordered in a manner agreeable to the views of the nation at large?" This was our subject on the evening of which we are now speaking. Mr. Best rose immediately after I had made the announcement, and so did Mr. Carpeu. The former gentleman, however, had succeeded in catching my eye, and so the word was with him. I had sometimes thought, though I had never said so, that this same Mr. Best was rather a trying person. Everything was always so very right with him. Everything which seemed annoying and ill-organised to others, was in his eyes extremely satisfactory. "The annoyance never came in *his* way? The officials had always behaved very well to *him*," he would say. And so with private individuals, they were all delightful. "He has always been excessively kind and civil to me," would be his words, when some acknowledged bear was being talked about; or, "whenever he has been with me he has shown none of these qualities." He liked everything: an east wind, an organ playing before his door.

Mr. Best, or, more properly speaking, the second chair on the left, rose and placed his knuckles on the table, and put his blotting-book straight, and remarked that the subject which had been selected for discussion was one of the most important with which it was possible for us to occupy ourselves. The government was

the—as it were—the trustee of the people; a portion of the income of everybody, directly or indirectly, was entrusted to the government, to be spent as it might think best. He heard people complain of the taxes. (Mr. Jones, the wood-engraver, who has a large family, sighed softly at this juncture.) He thought—the second chair left continued—that those who complained of the taxes were much to blame. He—second chair left—never complained. The government was wise. It took a portion of his income and applied it for his benefit. It supplied him—or the parochial institution which it had organised, supplied him—with pavement, with sewers, with light. The policeman was there to protect him, ready whengyer he was wanted. (At this Mr. Carpew allowed himself to indulge in a cough, which was hardly characterised by mutuality.) A town was provided for him to live in (Mr. Best went on), which was a model of admirable management to the earth; an army also was provided for him, and also a navy. It was a government whose management of home affairs was only equalled by its wisdom and discreetness in the conduct of its foreign policy. Yes, let us have confidence in government—in a government that was a paternal government, an unprejudiced government, an economical government, a government among whose members jobbery was unknown, and self-interest a word without meaning.

"Confusion!" said a voice at this particular moment, causing everybody, and especially Mr. Brogg, to start violently. This expression of feeling came, I am sorry to say, from Mr. Sideways, the profile drawer. He had made an enormous blot in doing the eyelash of one of his profiles; which always seemed to me, as far as one could judge upside down, to be inordinately gifted in this particular respect. Mr. Sideways took not the slightest notice of his own unmuted expression, nor of the surprised glances which were directed towards him, but seemed entirely occupied in trying to turn the blot into a shadow. The incident was very unlucky, I thought.

Our second chair (left) said no more on his side of the question after this interruption, while third chair right rose to reply, with a certain briskness and alacrity that looked like strong feeling. "Before proceeding with the business of the evening," he said, "I think it only right to make some slight allusion to a circumstance which has just occurred. It is painful to think that a young gentleman of great promise—I allude to the honourable member who occupies a seat next to my own—a gentleman who is, as it were, through the Foreign-office, connected with that very government whose proceedings we are invited to criticise this evening—that such an one, I say, should have been betrayed into the use of an expression which we must all regret should have—have—emanated from his lips." Here Mr. Carpew paused, and looked at his young friend through a double eye-glass, evidently ex-

pecting him to express some regret for what had happened. Nothing, however, appearing to be further from his young friend's thoughts—the fact being that he was in the very crisis of a curling upper-lip—it became necessary for Mr. Carpew to return to the original subject of the evening, which he did, after leaving a deep sigh on behalf of the proflist.

"I must qwn," he said, "that I have been altogether surprised by the conduct of my learned friend on the other side of the—of the—table, in taking upon himself the task of defending a government such as that under which we suffer. And here I may mention, by the way, that I have it from a private source on which entire dependence may be placed, that it is entirely impossible for those who at present represent that government to hold together for another fortnight." It was remarkable that Mr. Carpew always knew through a private source what was going to happen to government, and that the thing in question never did happen. Curiously enough this circumstance made no difference in the reception accorded by our members to Mr. Carpew's next prediction. "The government, then," proceeded our third chair (right), "cannot hold together for another fortnight, but that circumstance little affects the question before us, because we know beforehand that when another party takes the reins, public matters, and especially those of a pecuniary sort, will be conducted on no better principles than those which guide them at this moment. The honourable gentleman who represents the second chair (left) on the other side, congratulates himself on the fact that his money is taken from him and laid out to the best advantage. The honourable member might have spared himself those self-gratulations. How is that money which he contributes so cheerfully laid out? Is it laid out with an eye to the honourable member's interest? Gentlemen, a few days since, I was walking in one of our places of public recreation, and observing that a considerable number of workmen were all engaged in some gardening operation in one spot, I drew near the place to ascertain what they were doing. Mr. Secretary and gentlemen, when I came nearer I was able to detect at once what was going on. I found myself before an enclosed piece of turf measuring twenty-five paces one way by nineteen the other, and within it were no less than NINE MEN engaged in mowing the grass. Of course it will readily be conceived that these men were actually incommoded by their own numbers, finding it very difficult to operate in so small a space, and having to use every sort of precaution, in order to avoid cutting each other's feet off. Some of the men were standing idle, simply because it was impossible to get a bit of grass to cut at, and others, in order that they might devote all their energies to eluding the scythes of their more busy companions."

This statement created much sensation, and I observed that Mr. Brogg leaned forward at this

time and gave some direction to his brother, who immediately made a note.

"And this—this," the indignant member went on, "is the way in which the public money is wasted. This is the system on which my honourable friend would congratulate us. But, gentlemen, is this all? Are these nine men the only representatives of a piece of outrageous expenditure on the part of an extravagant government? Is it not the case that we have public offices? The work done or left undone at those offices is proverbially light—"

"No," remarked a voice emanating from the leaves of a blotting-book. It was the voice of the proflist.

"An honourable member says 'No,'" continued the speaker. "What does he mean?"

"Simply that it's not the case," remarked the other, still engaged with his drawing. "So much to do that you can't do any sort of justice to the papers and magazines, and when fellows drop in for a chat you're as likely as not to be called away in the very middle of an interesting subject. It's beastly, I can tell you." And this young gentleman, true to his cloth, continued to utter negatives at intervals, while Mr. Carpow went on with his speech.

"Gentlemen, in spite of what my honourable friend has said, I will freely assert that the small amount of business executed in our public offices is proverbial, and the unnecessary number of persons employed 'not' to do it is equally so. Gentlemen, what think you? Is there no waste in the articles of Stationery and Printing in connexion with our Government Institutions? Did any of you ever receive a Public Office letter? And if so, did it ever strike you that the paper was at all thick? Was there not more of it than was necessary? And did not the envelope resemble cardboard? What sort of pens—?"

"Nothing to compare to these," interrupted the proflist, holding up one of those which lay on the table, and instantly returning to his previous occupation.

"The pens provided at this institution are not public pens, nor are they provided at the public expense. They are good pens, very good pens, and I dare say our good secretary, Mr. Bradshaw, will tell us that we can afford them. But can the country afford them? Why should not the steel pen" (a groan from the proflist), "why should not the steel pen of commerce be good enough? It was good enough for our merchant-princes. Gentlemen, it may be said that these are small matters, and they may be so; but let it never be forgotten that great aggregates are made up of small items. Let it ever be remembered that we are to take care of the pence, and that then the pounds will look after themselves."

At this point I remarked that C. J. Brogg placed his finger on his brow, and became immersed in thought.

"Gentlemen," continued our member, "we shall do no good till a commission is appointed to inquire into what goes on at our public

offices, with a special eye to the introduction of straw paper and steel pens, and the reduction of the number of clerks and supernumeraries—"

I here thought it necessary to rise to order. I hinted that these especial allusions to a class which was represented among us so satisfactorily by the gentleman in the fourth chair (right) might appear to that gentleman to wear an unmutual aspect, and that perhaps such observations might be suspended with advantage. Mr. Brogg said "Hear, hear," very softly, and a thrill of gratification passed through my frame.

"At the suggestion of our worthy secretary," our third chair (right) went on, "I will say no more on the subject of our Civil Service, and those by whom it is misconducted, although I *might* make allusion to such matters as the frightful national expenditure in connexion with the single item of messengers, to the wanton use of the public stationery by the clerks for their own private purposes, and to other matters equally flagitious. But I will not thus add to the few words which I have to say. I will simply, in conclusion, request my honourable friend Mr. Best—I beg pardon—I will simply request the second chair (left), in case he should ever have to approach this subject again—and it is not for me to say that the hour is distant when his brilliant and shining abilities shall give him an opportunity of discussing such questions in an assembly of which this is but a species of type—I would request him, I say, to think twice before he utters a panegyric on a police force, the members of which are never to be found when they are wanted; on the good ordering of a town the mismanagement of whose street traffic is a disgrace to civilisation."

Our member ceased somewhat abruptly and sat down. What was my surprise when I became aware that he had scarcely done so, before the new member rose from his place, and at once catching, nay riveting—my eye, proceeded to make certain observations to which we all listened with rapt attention. I had not expected that Mr. Brogg would speak on this his first evening among us, but I was not then aware of the activity of that mighty intellect.

"Gentlemen," he began, "I hope it may not appear presumptuous in me if I venture to offer a few remarks in connexion with the admirable and lucid expressions of opinion to which we have just been listening. Gentlemen, if there was any feeling not wholly pleasurable excited by those masterly orations, I believe it to have been attributable solely and entirely to an unfounded impression that our two distinguished friends were to some extent differing in opinion; I say that such an impression is unfounded, and I am willing to abide by the assertion. For, after all, do not these two gentlemen virtually mean the same thing? Are they not mutually desiring each other's advantage? Does not Mr. — Mr. — I beg pardon," said our new member, listening to a whispered hint from his former tutor.

"Does not the honourable member for the second chair on the right, in supporting the claims of government, do so because he believes that government to be able and willing to protect the rights of—of—the gentleman who so ably fills our third chair right, while the last-named gentleman himself speaks strongly against the—as he thinks—extravagance of the government, from a strong feeling for his opponent's pocket, and because he believes that undue claims are made on that gentleman's means? Ah, gentlemen, this is indeed a Mutual Union. Viewed in this way, what an additional interest is communicated to a discussion such as that to which we have just listened! And such, I am persuaded, is the real state of the case. When, for instance, the honourable member who defended the governing powers of this country so ably, expressed himself to the effect that"—(Here Mr. Brogg consulted the notes of the Reverend Smear)—"that government was the trustee of the people, what did he mean, what *could* he mean, except that it was the trustee of the gentleman, who was on the other side of the table and also of the argument, and that therefore such trustee must be looked after strictly, but at the same time defended against unjust accusation? And again, on the other side, when the gentleman who mistrusts government, speaking with great indignation, says, 'And this—is the way in which the public money is wasted!' is it not virtually the money of his opponent of which he speaks, and as to the economising of which he is so anxious? Gentlemen, believe me, everything is as it should be. Even those nine gardeners engaged in mowing that small piece of ground of which our opposition member has spoken, were surely not too many. Think of the joy with which the ninth of those men announced to his family that he had been 'taken on' by government. Think of that man's salary. Will it not give an impetus to trade in the small neighbourhood in which it will be spent? The local baker, the chandler, nay, the very costermonger who pervades the streets, will rejoice in the sums of money which will reach them in consequence of the gardener's good fortune. Disputes, gentlemen—nay, not disputes—say, rather, debates, should be conducted as this has to which I have listened this evening with so much gratification. Hardly ever, if ever, have I enjoyed any experience of my life as much as this. To see such evidences of harmony of feeling, such marked unselfishness, such anxiety, as it were, for each other's good and each other's welfare, is to be refreshed by one of the most agreeable sights which a human being can behold, and it is for this that I now beg to thank this honourable assembly, as I do also for the permission which has been so liberally accorded to me to write myself one of its members."

There was a low murmur of approval as Mr. Brogg resumed his seat. His speech gave enormous satisfaction, and was pronounced on all hands to be perfectly mutual. The two gen-

tlemen, however, to whom more special allusion had been made, Messrs. Best and Carpew, seemed not a little astonished at the discovery of their own philanthropical intentions as revealed to them by our new member. Some of us, who happened to know that there was no love lost between these two gentlemen, could not help smiling when we heard such loving motives attributed to them; nor was I, for one, in the least surprised when Mr. Carpew rose from his seat and expressed himself to this effect: "While admiring," he said, "the general tendency of the speech of the newly-elected member, he could not allow one portion of that speech to be entered on our records"—here he looked hard at Mr. Smear—"without qualifying it with a word of protest. The honourable member for a chair which had not yet been numbered had stated that he (the honourable member for the third chair right) had, in making some recent remarks, had the interest of another gentleman at heart, and that he had made those remarks simply and solely with the desire to save that gentleman's pocket. Now, he wished this to be corrected promptly. He had said what he *had* said in obedience to his own convictions. He had condemned certain proceedings because he believed them to be condemnable, and the desire to benefit any member of that company, he could honestly say, had never once entered his head."

Mr. Best (second chair left) rose and stated "that he wished, on his own behalf, to enter a protest similar to that of his honourable friend who had just spoken. He (Mr. Best) had never once thought of his honourable friend during the delivery of his speech. When he (Mr. Best) had said that 'government was the trustee of the people,' he never meant that it was in any special way the trustee of his honourable friend. The honourable and newly-elected member had misunderstood both himself and his honourable friend, and had given them credit for motives by which they were not actuated."

C. J. Brogg begged leave to explain himself. "Human motive was hard to follow. There were few who could read it, few who could trace out its hidden intricacies. But especially were our own motives hard to find out. They could often be judged of better by others than by ourselves. In what men said or wrote, they frequently had meanings which they really were ignorant of themselves. The poet Shakespeare, the artist Turner: Had not intentions, had not meanings been discovered in the works of those great men of which they themselves had been ignorant? Undoubtedly such had been the case, and undoubtedly such had also been the case with the two distinguished gentlemen who had lately spoken. Those gentlemen did not fully know their own meaning."

Mr. Carpew was on his legs in an instant. He begged to say "that he did know his own meaning."

Mr. Best knew his own meaning perfectly. It was not that attributed to him by the honourable and newly-elected member.

Mr. Smear rose eager to expostulate. "Was this mutual? Was this like the society of which they were all members? When a gentleman, in the very benevolence of his nature, and with an eye sharpened by that benevolence, detected in the motives of other gentlemen germs of excellence of which they themselves were ignorant, was it wise, was it kind—nay, was it mutual—to reject and put away this imputation of worth? Was it judicious in honourable members to deny the existence of fine motive within them merely because they were not aware of its existence themselves?"

The two gentlemen who were the subjects of this little dispute begged to intimate that their opinions remained unshaken. They had, however, no wish to prolong the discussion. Let it rest. Unless any other gentleman had anything to say, perhaps it would now be better that the meeting should dissolve.

I was just about to act on this suggestion, when, to my great surprise, who should get up next to address the assembly but our young friend Mr. Sideways, the profile drawer, a gentleman who had never once spoken, or in any way contributed to the amusement of the society, since he had been a member. This young gentleman rose very slowly and languidly from his seat, looking at his last profile with his head on one side as he did so:

"As personal explanations seemed to be the order of the evening," he said, "he would take the opportunity of stating a grievance of his own, the existence of which was attributable to some member of the present company. There was some honourable member," he continued, "who had contracted the pernicious habit of jogging—jogging with his leg, a habit always troublesome, but more especially so in an assembly where gentlemen were engaged in writing, or—or—otherwise handling the pen."

Our young friend sat down again quite quietly, and immediately resumed his favourite occupation. We all looked rather indignant, and a marble stillness settled upon all our limbs, such as seemed to indicate that there was not a man capable of jogging his leg among us. Mr. Carpentier muttered, without rising from his seat, "That people whose tongues were so little under control that they used language for which they might be fined, had best not be too critical on the uncontrollable legs of others, and that those who lived in glass houses should not throw stones." Another gentleman remarked that the meeting had altogether been a very disorderly one, and little calculated to make a favourable impression on the new member—an expression of opinion in which I could not help cordially but sorrowfully coinciding. So I felt that the moment had come when it would be well for us to break up, and giving a little tap with my hammer, I intimated, in the fewest words possible, that the proceedings of the evening were over.

I took the opportunity, after the meeting was over, of expostulating with my friend the profile drawer on what he had done, or rather said, on the subject of leg-shaking. We were all liable, I said, to fall into habits of the sort, and besides, I asked, what particular harm did it do to him?

"Why, you see," he answered, "it interferes so with the—the—profiles."

"Well," I urged, "and suppose you didn't draw quite so many of them?"

"I must," was his answer. "I don't want to do it. But I've got into the habit now, and I can't leave off."

"There!" I said. "Now learn to be considerate. One man jogs his leg, and another draws profiles on blotting-paper. Bear and forbear."

"Well, at all events it wasn't you that jogged, old boy," he said, laughing.

And indeed it was not. A man must have legs before he can shake them, and mine were both cut off in a railway accident.

I have been thus particular in noting the events of that evening, both because it was the occasion of my becoming acquainted with the great C. J. Brogg, and also because it gives me the opportunity of showing him in the light of a peace-maker, and of presenting him to the world at once as a profound reasoner and an ardent philanthropist.

When our meeting was over, our new member took me aside to tell me that he had enjoyed the evening prodigiously. Think of that—"prodigiously." He had enjoyed himself prodigiously!

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I. THE NEW PLAY.

A LITTLE white retiring monument in the Eastport churchyard, marked with a carved violet and a simple girl's name, was beginning to turn a little grey, after two years' exposure. Over at Eastport soft rain was dropping gently on it; but in Paris, at the same moment, a hot Paris day was fading out, and French Capua, where Youth is always at the prow, and Pleasure sleepless at the helm, was getting ready for the night. Little standing armies were drawn up in rank and file at every theatre door; and in the court-yard of the Grand Sybarite Hotel, at the foot of the stone staircase, was waiting a carriage of the establishment, to take away guests to the opera or theatre.

The Sybarites had feasted some four hundred strong, and were dropping away down the steps two and three together, in a pleasant rout. The Frenchmen, very warm and mellow, like true voluptuaries, were lighting cigars and picking teeth, or abstractedly feeling their purloined sugar lumps in their pockets. The hotel was lit up. Lights flashed from the Hundred and One Bureaux. Indistinctly the stars were seen through the great glass roof over the court. There was a glimpse of Paradise at the bright café to the left, where were wandering in the sated diners to lounge on velvet. Bright clean waiter youths lolled on the great stairs and chattered; for work was done. Carriages plunging and clattering in under the porch, were pulled up with violence, and, flinging out a visitor, clashed to their doors, and were gone again. There was hush in the life of the huge hotel; for it had been rather spent with the grand operation just passed through, and there was a reaction. The Capuans were languid.

The carriage of the establishment had been waiting more than half an hour, when a shining boy of a waiter called from the top of the steps to the coachman to be on the alert, for his company were coming down. Presently there did come down a tall Englishman in evening uniform, with an auburn-haired girl in a white cloak upon his arm—wreath, fan, and snowy gloves. He was clean, fresh, and transparent of skin, as only

Englishmen are. Two young gay waiters leaning on the balustrade smiled after them. A man in green and gold, bursting from some concealed hutch or warren, was holding the door open magnificently, then shut it to firmly as the couple entered, and the direction was given.

Boy-waiter the first looked at his neighbour inquiringly. Boy-waiter the second answered the look in speech.

"Capitaine Anglais."

"La petite? Tenez—ça va! Numero 60."

Deft handmaids had long since investigated minutely the crested ivory brushes in Numero 60, and studied Madame's dresses, and seen on a roony portmanteau large white initials, "C. F.," and read with lame pronunciation a little card, "Captain Fernor."

Not alone the two English in the neat coupé, but all Paris, was converging to the one theatre. They were lighting up Aladdin's Wonderful Lamps all along the magic Boulevards. Crowds of the faithful sitting at tiny marble tables, sipping from the cloudy carafes, saw through the trees the train of dark coaches trundling by with a flare to the one spot.

The English girl-wife, sitting in the carriage of the Sybarite establishment, burst out with all a child's raptures as she saw this gay panorama pass by. She broke out with little soft spasms of rapture. "How beautiful! How lovely! O, look! Do look!" while the English captain, calm as one who had seen all the known shows of the world, does look out—as a concession to this pleasant popular humour, and says that they do these things very well on the whole.

He was pleased that she was pleased; that is, he was calmly complacent. And, as they rolled along, he did the showman as if he were good naturedly talking in his own grounds. There will not be so enraptured an audience at any of the theatres open to-night as his companion. It was her first night in Paris.

They got to their theatre. "Some fellow has a new play to-night," said Captain Fernor, carelessly, as he helped her out and looked round with disgust at some one who jostled him. "They do make such a fuss about these things in this country."

The "fellow" who had written the play was a very famous young author, who, in his round of daily life, had played many characters, and shown

many profiles. He was brilliant, witty, sentimental, a petted darling of the saloons, free and easy in manner, freer and easier in his life, penniless and political. In short, a true young French author. All these profiles, however, he might have shown save the last; which was the wrong one—and which he had exhibited to wrong persons. So that when the light-haired English captain and his wife—in custody of a dreadfully business-like woman in green, armed with little footstools—was let into a box or balcony, they found it crowded to the ceiling, but with two armies mixed together below, who at the proper season would draw off and join battle.

Captain Fermor settled himself, drew his hand up and down freely over his fresh clean shirt linen (perhaps the freshest and cleanest of all shirt linen in that assembly), fetched out his glass, and did the honours of the place. The girl beside him had a round quiet soft face, that would be called handsome, with a *good* smile. With fresh round cheeks, that twenty years hence will be fresher and rounder; she had a smile and a laugh ever hovering—hiding, perhaps—at the corner of her mouth: which, on faint encouragement, fluttered out and crossed to the other side, like some of the little figures in the Strasburg clock. She was very happy at that moment, in the gay and almost exciting scene, in herself, and in the noble—almost too superior—protector and patron who sat beside her reading his bill, who was so good natured as to teach her in reference to many of the little matters about her.

He took her through that document. "These fellows," he said, with comic pity, "will make a play out of anything. Just listen: 'L'AMOUR SE PAIE.' This is what we have come to see, L'Amour se Paie. There they are, all like children down there, crushing each other flat to get a doll or a bit of sugar-stick. I should like to throw it down to them—how they would struggle for it!"

The girl laughed at this pleasant way of putting the thing, and looked down at the amphitheatre of big children below. It was the most crowded playground they had seen for some time; but the game would presently turn out of a rough sort. A low hum and buzz rose from it, and nearly every one was standing up with the usual optical fire-arm levelled from his eye.

Next door, as it were, were a pair of typical Frenchmen, well dined and well filled. They had about begun to live; that meal was almost the first tangible act of this day. One was black and glossy-haired, with cheeks shaded over, through imperfect shaving, like parchment written upon; the other a gross swollen Frenchman, who under his waistcoat might have been corded round and round like brawn, and whose hair, black, short, and stubbly, dipped down in the centre of his forehead like the peak of a lady's waist. Both did a great deal of navy's work, with little pickaxes, about their teeth, and both contemplated the English girl with quiet

and critical study, as if she were part of the entertainment for which they had paid.

"English?" said the corded gentleman, half across his pickaxe. (He had come on a rocky and obstinate stratum.)

"Yes," said the other, also excavating; "a dish fresh and soft, too!" Both critics, calmly approbative, did not even care to drop their voices.

"Dear Charles," said the girl, delighted with everything about, "how charming all this is! It is fairy land! O what a place to live in! Ah," said she, suddenly, "do you recollect Roger de Garçon, that you used to lend me? Dear me," she added, in a sort of rapture of recollection, "how pleasant that was! Only this morning I was reading the old copy. But you forget."

"Ah, yes!" said he. "To be sure. You know I don't like plays. Why don't they begin in the orchestra?" Someway he did not dwell on the reminiscence with the same relish as she did.

"How long ago all that seems," said the girl; "like a dream. Your going to India—and coming back again. And that soft, sweet child Violet; who had such a charming name, and was so cold and treacherous—"

"A year and six months," said he, in his dryest key, "is a year and six months, I believe. There were things at that place, and persons at that place, one meets every day. We have done with it now, and had better let it rest, and think of the present."

"But, somehow," she went on, "I felt such an interest in her, though I never saw her. I felt to her like a sister. And I assure you," she continued, in a little confusion, "only that papa had set his heart on your marrying me—I had often begged of him to go away and leave the place; it seemed so cruel to interfere with such a soft darling as I fancied her."

Fermor coloured. "You are candid," he said, a little bitterly. It was only the first two months of their marriage, or the infusion would have been stronger. "You tell the truth, certainly. I suppose there are to be no secrets between husband and wife."

She smiled, taking this for a welcome little burst of nuptial jealousy. (Olives come in very pleasantly with wine.)

"I like to talk of Eastport," she said, coquettishly. "For I was very happy there, though so ill. And yet it was so odd, so incomprehensible."

"What, pray?" said he, suddenly.

"I mean *her* turning out such a cold, designing creature—marrying that other man. I could not have fancied it. I was so sorry, though it was so fortunate for me."

A smile of complacency struggled in Fermor's face, while he said, "And for me too, I suppose I must say."

"And O! will you forgive me for telling you?" she went on, eagerly. "When I first heard of it, I thought the poor girl had been what they call thrown over, and I felt so much for her, that I said to papa—"

Fermor turned sharply round. "We have come to hear this play," he said, "and to amuse ourselves. By-and-by, we shall have time enough for these reminiscences; so please, now——" And he forced the rest of the sentence into a hard smile and a hard nod.

She was sufficiently trained to see how thin the ice was about this part. And she moved away cautiously from the subject.

The three strokes of a mallet on the stage made every flower rustle its leaves as if a breeze had fluttered round, and the curtain went up.

L'Amour se Paie was after the true pattern—of which regular "forms" seem kept in stock in France. It was very long and all conversational, and shifted from Madame Hauteville's drawing-room to her garden and back again. When it came to be printed by M. Dentu of the Palais Royal, the reader found his page planted scantily with a few lines of type, and each line boasted a few meagre shrubs of words. Still it was a marvel of neat wit—wit that is fined and delicately grained with emery-powder, and real ladies and gentlemen seemed to walk from Madame Hauteville's drawing-room to her garden and back again.

The way in which the truth, or aphorism, or even hypothesis of L'Amour se Paie was set before the audience, lay in working together a financier of tempered fun, a marquise, a Paris man of fashion, a simple artless school-girl, and a "noble" tutor, suffering from his situation. All during the first act these threads were plaited languidly: a warp of conversation was woven in volubly. The Exquisite showed his exquisiteness, the simple girl her simplicity, the financier his finance, and the "noble" tutor his nobleness—yet nothing had been done. As the act-drop came down there was applause from the grown children crowded below, applause met strangely by scornful laughs and a few hisses. But as yet there was nothing to applaud, nothing to condemn; the storming party were artfully waiting their time, until, say the end of the third act; when, waving their red flag, they would fly at the redoubt and sack the doomed piece.

Captain Fermor, looking down from his loge, which was high enough, and from a yet higher balcony of lofty English disdain, said, with a curling lip, "And they call this thing a play, do they? What is it all about? Why, it isn't a patch upon the Haymarket."

The fresh soft girl knew French—that is, the French of men and women—thoroughly. Fermor had some old building materials of that tongue, bought at school, lying about in his head.

"Oh, but, Charles," she said, "that poor young man, so chivalrous——"

"Do you mean that whining tutor?" he said, contemptuously. "The whole thing is a bore. It must fail. I wish," he added, putting up his hand politely to stop a yawn, "I wish we had gone to that other, what d'ye call it, spectacle."

The two Frenchmen still looked at the English lady steadily. The corded one—mellowed with

good Medoc and coffee, and a little cognac on the surface of the coffee, which, coming so near the top, gave his cheeks and eyes a warm inflamed tone—approved. He nodded approval to his neighbour. He was thinking how it would be compatible with his other little engagements to—he would make up his mind before the play was over.

CHAPTER II. A MEETING.

SECOND act. The mournful tutor was leaning his forehead on his hand and trying to read. For six francs a day he had to come and give a lesson to the simple girl whom he loved. She *has* loved her tutor, because, as she told her friend, Made-moiselle Laroux, "he was the first man I had ever seen, just as I was éprise of my first doll." In truth, she had a leaning to the exquisite, who was so pleasant with his Paris talk. Financier again, tutor, marquise, school-girl, all in a check pattern of talk; but no serious work.

At that moment there was a rustle and noise of moving chairs close beside the English lady and gentleman, with the sound of a box-door closing like the click of a trigger. Three seats had been vacant the whole night, guarded jealously. These were now at last to be filled. Then there came boldly down to the front, where she stayed a moment drawn up to her full height for the house to admire, a tall figure, lustrous and brilliant, flashing under the lights with every motion. A few beings of the parterre, not engaged in tumult, instantly turned their backs to the stage and levelled their glasses with effrontery. With her also came a dark square-built young man, with vellum cheeks and thoughtful meditative eyes, and a second gentleman. But they were in cold colours—dull sketches in greys and neutral tints, beside *her*. They sat down together. She continued to draw all eyes.

It was that bright radiant look which seemed to reflect back the radiance of fascination. Her rich black hair flashed back the light from a hundred ripples. It hung over her white forehead, and was gathered away to the right and left like the heavy folds of a curtain. Her face was oval, her eyebrows marked and arched, her eyes liquid and dark; and, though brilliant, were not sharp nor piercing, and, above all, her face seemed to be lit up from within by a strange piquant expression. But among the folds and draperies of her hair (and this the opera-glass musketeers in the parterre noted specially) was a rich scarlet geranium placed with excellent effect, and, carelessly dropping from her shoulders, was an Eastern black and gold opera-cloak. She might be a Jewess or a Spaniard.

The English girl was absorbed in the tutor and his woes. She had never seen anything so delightful. Fermor, with a curl of depreciation on his lip, seen under the black opera-glass, was slowly travelling round the house.

"I never saw such an exhibition," said he, not taking the glass from his eyes; "but we must stay, for I suspect there will be——"

He stopped suddenly, for the two muzzles of his glass were resting on the new faces just come in. The glass dropped on his knees. Then he gave a half start; half rose and sank again into his chair.

His eyes were fixed on the apparition of the bright lady and her two companions. A few "amateurs" in the parterre were looking too; but the whole house was absorbed in the play. The girl beside Fermor, with tearful earnest eyes, and the round chin resting on her hand, was wrapped up in the young tutor. She had never heard anything so interesting. There was such agony, such suffering in his face—that—

Suddenly she heard her husband whisper bluntly:

"We must go away. Come!"

She came back to practical life.

"Go away!" she said, in blank astonishment.

"Why? Oh, no, no! Just at this point, too!"

"I am sick of it," said he, rising. "I have a headache. I suppose you will not ask me to stay if I am ill?"

She rose in a second, and gathered up her cloak and "matériel." She looked back wistfully at the noble young tutor, whose face showed actual writhings of moral suffering; his sense of the degradation of his position was so very acute. As she turned to go, her cloak caught in a chair and overturned it. A flash of faces was turned to them, and a subdued "ts—s—" was heard.

"There! they will all see us!" said Fermor, with something like ferocity, "and I wanted to get out without noise."

He caught her arm roughly, and hurried her away.

She was frightened. "What is the matter, dear Charles?" she said again.

"Nothing," he said, shortly. "I did not say there was. Now please don't tease me, and let us get home in quiet."

He hurried her along the great passages. They got to the top of the flight of stairs.

"Take my arm!" he said.

There, too, at the same point, they were met by another party going away. It was the brilliant lady and her companions, who could not have heard a sentence of the new play, and were literally going away almost as soon as they had come.

Though in a little trouble, the girl was struck by the brightness of the Spanish-looking face and the flashing of her beauty, which she had now seen for the first time.

"O look, look, Charles!" she whispered, hurriedly; when, to her amazement, the lady came to meet them.

"Captain Fermor," said the stranger, and in her voice there was a sustained chanting sound almost melancholy, "what a meeting! How strange, how curious! And at a theatre of all places in the world!"

Fermor was not yet composed enough to answer steadily. He forced a kind of smile.

"Not forgotten me, surely?" said the lady.

"You remember when we last met, or when we were to have met?"

"Yes," said Fermor, faintly.

"And this," said she, "is Mrs. Fermor? I was sure of it, at a distance. I was one of your husband's old acquaintances. One of that crowd which he had to brush through, when life for him was literally a ball-room. One of the crowd whom he has paid visits to, and taken down to supper, and whose name he has forgotten by next morning."

Fermor was now collected enough to speak as Fermor was accustomed to speak.

"We are going home," he said; "a stupid play, that has given me a headache."

"How long do you remain in this place?" said the Spanish lady, abruptly, addressing Mrs. Fermor.

The latter, who had been looking at the strange lady quite fascinated, answered hastily, "O—we are to stay a month, I believe."

Fermor struck in hurriedly: "No, no. We leave to-morrow; we are obliged to return. Got a letter to-day."

"Stay a month? Leave to-morrow?" said the Spanish lady, with a smile. "Then your plans are scarcely decided. You recollect my brother?" she added. "This is Mr. Romaine, his friend."

"I am afraid," said Fermor, "we must go away now. We have to—"

"Where are you staying?"

"At the Grand Hotel," said the English girl, who was addressed.

"O, then we shall see you there. Ours is Number 110. We have hardly chosen our rooms yet. But we shall see each other very often, and renew an old acquaintance. Indeed, we shall come and see you to-morrow," said the Spanish-looking lady, gaily. "Louis and I. You will be at home at twelve?"

"Yes, yes," said Fermor, hastily. "Delighted To-morrow, at twelve."

"Good night, then," said the Spanish-looking lady. "I am so glad to have met you again. This is life, you see, all over, parting in a ball-room—meeting at a theatre. Now, Mr. Romaine, be bitter on that text."

Mr. Romaine—whose face had a handsome gauntness, and whose black eyes, and whose black moustache hanging like curls over his mouth, had an odd attraction for Mrs. Fermor—said something in a low voice to his friend.

"Ah, exactly," said the Spanish lady. "To-morrow, then, at twelve. Good night."

In the dark carriage, where Fermor's face could not be seen, the girl began to chatter and wonder.

"And you have forgotten her name?" she said, suddenly. "How wonderful! I should have remembered that splendid face till my dying day. I shall long to see her again."

"Yes," said he, catching at what she had suggested; "is it not odd? I shall recollect it later, I suppose."

"It is so strange," she said; "if I had seen a

man with such a face, I should never have forgotten his name."

Captain Fermor was moody and gloomy, and said impatiently, "I dare say—no doubt. Please don't ask me why this, and why that, and wonder at me for this and that. I have a headache, and the racket of this place is enough to give one a hundred headaches."

She was full of concern in a moment.

"How thoughtless and stupid I am," she said. "Why did you not tell me?"

At their hotel the green and gold official came rushing, and opened the door, as if it were a matter of life and death they should be extricated at once. The great stairs flashed out white and spacious. The sleepless Bureaux, where the lights blazed, were busy with their entries and eruptions of arrivals and departures day and night long; of what were, in fact, the Births and Deaths to the Grand Hotel and its monster family.

At the top of the stairs Fermor stopped short suddenly. "What a place!" he said. "I am sick of their noise and flurry. One can't get a minute's quiet here. Look there! What did I say?"—as another carriage clattered in. "Shall we leave early in the morning, and go to the Mirabeau, or some Christian place?"

Deeply concerned for the pain which he must be suffering, she answered, eagerly, "Yes, Charles. Or what would you say—could we not go now?"

It was not nine o'clock.

"A very good idea," he said, with real pleasure. "You could put a few things together, and send for the boxes in the morning. You are a clever child, and a ready child too."

Greatly elated by this unusual commendation, she tripped away.

He went down to the Bureaux, where they were so busy with the Births and Deaths. This was to be a Death, for he was going to ask for his bill. As he came out suddenly, a lady and gentleman, who had descended from the carriage, stopped him.

"What! Home again?" she said, "and we just as soon as you."

Fermor began to gnaw at his moustache.

In a moment a waiter came to him with a strip of paper, and asked would monsieur have a carriage?

"Going away?" said the Spanish lady. "Only think, Louis! At this hour, too. Surely not. Recollect, you were to have seen us to-morrow."

Fermor crushed up the paper. "We have had to alter our arrangements," he said. "We are obliged to go. We have very little time. So—"

"No, no," said the Spanish lady, smiling, and shaking her head. "This is a little fourberie—some of the old old phantoms. Don't you recollect when we lived at Eastport, and when we were all so happy together? I dare say you have told her all about the time. No? Absurd. You can't go to-night. Where is Mrs. Fermor? I shall easily persuade her. Send up for her."

Fermor looked at the lady doubtfully and irresolutely, still crumpling the paper.

"No, no," she said, with encouragement. "To-morrow morning is more rational. More like a calm sensible Englishman. Above all, when we meet an old friend whom we have not seen for so long, and whom a mere chance has helped us to meet. Do oblige me in this. Let us sit down here awhile in Paradise, in the Arabian Nights! There are a hundred things I want to ask you—a hundred things *you* will want to hear from me. It will be old times returned over again."

There was something almost fascinating in her face and voice. Fermor, bewildered, confused, above all, surprised at the strange change in her—at the lightness and airiness of her manner (for she seemed a new Pauline)—made no resistance, but passed out with her into the bright colonnade where the thousand-and-one tables are clustered, and the clink of glass and china furnishes music.

Five minutes later came tripping down the young Mrs. Fermor. She was ready, and her little packing all done. But her husband was gone. A little confused from the sense of this desertion, she went in to the Bureau.

Numero 60: Yes. Monsieur had been furnished with the note. A little fit of curiosity came over her at that moment, and she thought she would refresh her husband's memory about the lady at the theatre—pleasantly surprising him with superior information. Who were in Numero 110?

A few pages turned over with complaisance, and the young lady registrar answered:

"Numero 110 et 111, Monsieur et Mdle. Manuel."

The young girl started. At the same moment an obliging young boy-waiter came to tell her that "Mr. Captain" was outside the café, sitting with a lady.

CHAPTER III. THE COLONNADE OF THE GRAND HOTEL.

UNDER that colonnade, and in the cool air, with carriage-lights twinkling past, and seen through the leaves of the trees, as though in a garden—with airy waiters flitting by with snowy napkins for wings, the English lady and gentleman sat at coffee. It was the best scenery in the world for confidence.

Every moment he was more and more amazed at the change in her.

She was a new Pauline, older, yet "finer," more dazzling, more splendid, more womanly; more decided, too, in manner—firmer, and more distinct in her voice. She was leaning over the little marble table, looking at him earnestly as she talked.

"Two years is a long time," she said, sadly. "I seem to have lived a quarter of a century. A thousand events have been crowded into that time. Spain, France, England, Spain again. We have been always travelling. It," she added,

in a low voice, "it was the only thing. Rest, seemed like death."

Fermor dropped his eyes. "And Spain," he said, absently; "why Spain again?"

"Ah," she said, "our poor mother, you know. It was *her* country, and it was natural that she should like to see it before she died. Old people somehow think of these things. We had money, thank God. Her cousin left her everything. But she did not enjoy it long. Poor mamma."

"Good God!" said Fermor, in some distress. "Is she—? I did not hear—I did not, indeed. I have heard nothing. I was so far away, or I should have written."

Pauline laughed, a laugh faintly harsh, which was one of the changes he had noted in her.

"Written!" she said. "Why? There was no reason in the world for *that*. We wanted no consolation from any one. You saw very little of her. I can fancy, too, in India, with precious time taken up—every moment of it. I have often heard what strain is put there on men of capacity."

Fermor looked at her a little uneasily; but the large eyes seemed to be fixed on him with perfect honesty.

"Yes," he said, "they *did* work us there. But I am so sorry to hear this. And when—"

"O, long ago! A few months after you—had left. She was half a Spaniard, and very sensitive and delicate; and our poor Violet's death took hold of her mind a good deal, and, at last, unsettled it a little. You might have remarked how she doted on *her*—more, I believe, a great deal, than on me."

There was a silence for some moments. Then Fermor said, in a low voice:

"And Violet—poor Violet—I am glad you have mentioned it—I have often, I assure you, thought of it, and of that night, and what my conduct must have appeared. And I was so grieved when I heard it. But you know," he added, eagerly; "*what* could I do? I don't like speaking of it, it is so distressing a business, and has ended so unfortunately; but—"

"Why not?" said Pauline, hurriedly. "There is no need to take *that* view of it. After all, it is different with me, you know. Sisters will be sisters, and I," she added, more quickly, "had an affection for her that was almost extravagant. But *that* is my concern, you see. I must keep my own sufferings for myself. She was a child, too soft and tender for life. Had she been a girl," added Pauline, earnestly, "she would have lived."

Again she laughed, and Fermor saw a film gathering over her eyes. She brushed it away hastily. "Is it not absurd?" she said. "And two years ago!"

Fermor was all softened. "The picture of poor Violet came back on him with a pang of self-reproach.

"I know," he said again, eagerly, "what you, what she must have thought. The business, I confess, *had* an odious look. But, if you had been behind the scenes, and seen what pressure—"

"Of course," said she. "A mere ordinary affair.

I suppose five thousand things of the same sort go on every year in England. Poor foolish girls take fancies, and men, not so foolish, are naturally flattered; and so it goes on for a time. Then it is discovered that the whole is impracticable and will never do. Intellect must have something more to lean on than mere love and worship. And so the whole vanishes in a pretty cloud of romance."

"Exactly," said Fermor.

"Your friends," said she, with eyes fixed on him, "naturally wished to see you advance in the world. You had brilliant prospects, abilities, good interest, and it was a pity to sacrifice them."

"Exactly," said Fermor again. "You quite understand it. It was a youthful attachment, but you know it would have ruined me. It was better for *both* in the end."

"Exactly," she said; "better for both. You say it was the only sensible course, after all. Of course you are right. Only a man of firmness and resolution could see it in *that* light. One of your weak youths would have plunged headforemost with her into ruin, and let the future take care of itself."

"I considered," said Fermor, growing quite assured, "that I was bound to look to *her* as well as to myself. Far more, indeed, I know human nature pretty well. I have, in fact, made it a practical study. I knew there would be some suffering at first; but that would be far better than ten times that suffering later."

Pauline's face was growing intensely earnest as she listened. When he looked up, the expression changed suddenly.

"I *knew*," said Fermor, "you would make all allowance. I was sure of it. The fact was, I saw it was—I may tell you now—I saw it was a mistake, about as soon as it was done. I knew it, and was quite grieved."

Her eyes were fixed on him with a greater and greater earnestness. But he did not see how her lips were compressed. "Yes?" she said, with an interrogative anxiety.

"We can't be always wise. As you say, the next best thing after a mistake is to see that it *is* a mistake. I saw it the very next day."

"You *did*?" she asked, with a sudden energy that would have startled another; then added, hastily: "To be sure. Sensible always. We are only women, after all."

"Poor child!" he went on. "Another would have been blunt, and spoken at once. I thought it better to trust to time and chance, those two great contrivers."

Again her eyes were fixed on him with a strange and almost deadly expression. "You *did*?" she said. "That was the plan, was it? I see. And it succeeded."

He looked up in a little surprise.

"Poor, poor Violet!" she suddenly broke out. "Poor, sweet, wretched darling! To be handed over to chance and time, those two great contrivers. What a life! Why could we not have saved her, poor lost darling? Time and chance,"

and she gave one of the strange laughs. "That was the secret, was it? But we should have had a stronger and less delicate subject to practise on. O, Violet! Violet!"

Her face dropped upon the little marble table, and Fermor heard her hysterical sobs as she stayed in this position for many minutes. He was greatly distressed, almost shocked at the violence of this grief, and tried to soothe her. In a few moments she raised her face and wiped her eyes. "This is very foolish," she said. "We women should train ourselves. But it does me good to think and talk of all this; it brings relief. It has quite comforted me meeting you. We must have many a talk on this matter in London and here. But you go to-morrow. Of course, you have your duties, and cannot waste time on a poor lonely sister like me."

She looked at him with a sort of shy fascination, and her voice was very musical and melancholy. "Twelve o'clock!" she said, rising suddenly; "how time has flown!"

"Good gracious!" he said, for the first time thinking of Mrs. Fermor. "So late! Yes, I shall see you again. We are not bound to a day. But I am so glad you have taken a calm, sensible view of this affair, as, indeed, I anticipated you would."

"Ah, yes! Let us go in, now," she said. They went into the great court. It was almost deserted. But the sleepless Bureaux were still at work. At the bottom of the great stair she said "Good night."

She followed him with her eyes as he ascended slowly: when he reached the top, he looked down and saw her figure standing in wonderful attitude of grace. He thought again of the curious changes that had taken place in her. "What a crisis," he said, as he looked down, "to pass through! How would a less skilful man have done?"

At that distance he could not see her face, nor the features in her face. But the eyes were flashing. And he could not hear the hard voice that came from the lips:

"It was, then, his own work; and he is satisfied! Before God, then, I shall not spare him!"

Once more, at the door of the lobby, he looked down, and saw her hand raised towards him. Complacently, he thought it was a sort of salutation, and he waved his own to her. Then went his way along the galleries. There was a smile on his face as he passed along; it was softened to a gentle feeling of romance very pleasurable. "My life," he thought, "has been a strange one. It might be written in a book. Who can tell what is coming, either?"

He found the young wife up, waiting. She had been writing—writing home to her father. He required one letter every day, without fail.

"I was having some coffee out on the Boulevards," said Fermor. "So sorry to have kept you; met a friend."

There was a curious look on the young wife's face, a colder one than he had ever seen.

"Tell me about it," she said, calmly. "An

old friend, or a new one? Had he anything to tell?"

Fermor walked to the window impatiently. "Nothing that you would care to hear," he said. "By the way, we need not be hurrying away in the morning. There is no necessity for such a precipitate departure. It would look absurd. We should be having the police after us!" He said this as though *she* had been proposing it.

"Just as you please," she said.

Her passiveness mystified him. But no more was said on the matter.

On the next day, about two o'clock, Captain Fermor fixed a flower in his button-hole, chose out a new pair of gloves, put some perfume on his handkerchief, and sent up to Numero 110, to know if Mademoiselle Manuel was at home. "I have not talked to a clever woman I don't know when," he said; "I must tell her the whole story about poor Violet from the very beginning." He had, in fact, prepared a dramatic little narrative, in which he himself was painted as an object of great interest.

The boy-waiter came with word that Mr. and Miss Manuel had left for London by the early train that morning.

ITALIAN IRON.

THERE are many points of view, besides the merely politico-religious, from which the Italian Convention, and the approaching union of the whole peninsula under one government, deserve to be regarded. Unless there comes some unlucky hitch in European politics, we shall see in Italy an immense development of manufactures and industry within the next few years.

We seldom reflect enough how much we in England owe, not only to our insular position which has kept us free from invasion, but to our freedom from close personal concern in continental wars. We have had far too much to do with them; we feel that, to our sorrow, every time the tax-gatherer comes round, and Mr. Gladstone feels it every time he performs one of his grand financial feats: but we have scarcely ever been interested in them at first hand. War with us has never been engrossing enough to hinder us from cultivating the arts of peace. The best soil in Europe (for, on the whole, we have the smallest proportion of utterly unimprovable land of any European country), the richest stores of mineral wealth, and time and opportunity to use them—these have been our advantages. Look, on the other hand, at the Continent during the half century ending with Waterloo—towns taken, trade paralysed or killed outright, countries ravaged, above all, men drawn off in far too large a percentage from peaceful occupations. We too had armies, but only large enough to win renown, and keep ourselves in practice, and support our position among the nations. We have always managed to do a good deal of our fighting by deputy. Subsidising Austrians or Russians, even though it does make the taxes heavier, is far less destruc-

tive to a nation than sweeping off the best of the population by wholesale conscriptions. A people does not soon recover such a terrible drain; it is just the case of a man who has had a wasting fever. They tell us that, in some parts of Germany, the people are still feeling the effects of the Thirty Years' War.

But things are changing rapidly. We no longer have it all our own way in the manufacturing world. Fifty years of something more like peace than the fifty which preceded them, are giving other nations a chance.

France moves less than some of the rest, because France keeps up such a vast army. But even France is now a very different rival in the walks of trade from the France of half a century ago. The excessive caution of French traders used to be proverbial; nearly all their largest transactions were merely retail compared with those of our houses. Now, everything in France is wholesale. "Retail business," says M. About, in his *Le Progrès*, "cannot keep its ground: even the little village shops must soon be branches of some company. The small dealer is doomed to disappear altogether."

As steam has lessened the difference between our own and other navies, so it has gone far to equalise the manufacturing power of nations. Italy with no coal, but with abundant metallic ores, can now get seaborne coal cheaply, and will surely turn her energies in more hopeful directions, when the enervating crotchets of pope and cardinals have gone the way of the miserable political system which so long paralysed the country.

The island of Elba is full of iron, not deposited in regular beds as it so generally is with us, but rather (as in Cornwall) thrown up by volcanic agency, the molten metal having turned the stratified rocks near it, into metamorphic. Like Cornwall, the greater part of the island is of granite or serpentine, mingled, however, with such a variety of crystalline forms as to make it a very paradise of mineralogists: aqua-marine, tourmaline, rock crystals of all kinds, aspar, agate, &c. Some of these are very rare. A silicate of aluminium and of lithium, which M. Simonin* calls "Castor," is found only here and in Sweden; and a silicate of aluminium and cesium, which he calls "Pollux," is peculiar to the island; a small crystal of this, half as big as one's thumb, was sold to the Paris Mineralogical Museum for twelve pounds sterling. Ilvaite is another mineral only found here. It is a silicate containing much iron. Lelièvre discovered it in 1800, and called it iénite, in honour of the victory of Jena. This put all the German savans in a furious rage; iénite they would not hear of; Lelièvre they rechristened it, intending, thereby, to honour the discoverer. So that, as M. Simonin and others call it ilvaite (from "Ilva," the Latin name of the island), the luckless mineral has at present three names.

* Writing in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* for 15th of September last.

Other "curiosities" are the beautiful arrangements of golden-yellow pyrites crystal, which the miners sell to visitors. There is also loadstone in several forms. The business of specimen hunting has long been well understood; indeed, more than one of the better cicerones have made important mineralogical discoveries. But the iron is the great thing, and it is found everywhere. The island is as full of it as the "Paris Mountain," in Anglesea, was of copper. A good deal of it occurs in the form of sand, like that on the beach at Taranaki, the richness of which helped to make the unhappy New Plymouth people so eager to keep their allotments. Now, how is the iron worked? Why, very inefficiently. Most of the mines are mere surface scrapings. In many places nothing else is needed. At Rio Marina, for instance, where you land from the Tuscan Piombino, the very mud is black and metallic, and the sea is, for a great distance, coloured dark red by the waters of the little stream which comes down from the "iron hills." The mode of bringing down the ore is primitive enough. You see a long string of donkeys carrying it in their panniers. Gangs of porters are then employed to haul it (still in baskets) on ship-board. The wheelbarrow is an unknown institution. Possibly the Elbans have the same prejudice against it which the Scotchman at Oporto found the Portuguese had; when he had imported a barrow at considerable cost, his gardener at once gave warning, indignantly asking, "Would you set a man to do the work of a beast?" Mechanical science is at a low ebb in Elba. There is not a crane in the whole island, nor a "slide" up which loaded waggons might, as they came down, pull up those which had been emptied at the bottom. When something of this kind, with tramway to match, was proposed to the Grand-Duke Leopold, "It's very clever; but what is to be done with all my donkeys?" he replied. Still, in spite of the grand-duke, the quantity of iron exported has greatly increased—from some fifteen thousand tons a year to an average of fifty-six thousand tons between 1851 and 1861. The year ending last June gave a total of one hundred thousand tons. At present no more can be exported with roads and means of shipment so imperfect as they are, and an open roadstead instead of a safe harbour. But the demand must go on increasing rapidly, and the supply is unlimited. M. Simonin compares it to the guano in the Chincha Isles, which, in the same way, is concentrated in a small space; but, in the guano isles, the wealth is only on the surface; in Elba the deposits of ore are so thick that they can supply a million tons a year for two thousand years without being exhausted. M. Simonin, who writes in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, an advanced and somewhat "Anglophile" publication, traces the great backwardness of the mining art in Elba and on the opposite mainland, chiefly to the fact that the state has worked its own mines. This concession to English views is very remarkable in one of a nation who are so fond of expecting government to do everything for

them. The Tuscan smelting furnaces work, it appears, only six months in the year; and those who know the expense of lighting a blast-furnace can readily calculate how destructive such a system must be to anything like profits.

Another evil is, that the mines were alienated to a Leghorn company, in 1851, for a term of years, of which seventeen have still to run. The Austrian bayonets had propped up the grand-ducal throne during the troubles of 'forty-eight, and their help was not given gratis. Who is to make the improvements during these seventeen years? Could not the Italian government borrow money and buy out the shareholders? Unfortunately, most of the shares have got into the hands of the grand-duke's family; and they (after their second exile) are hardly likely to help the King of Italy out of the dilemma. Meanwhile, it seems very sad that the new kingdom, which wants iron-plated ships, rifled cannon, and, above all, metals for her railways, should have to get these things from abroad. Only last year a contractor took twelve thousand tons of rails from French houses which use this very Elba iron. Italy must make these things for herself, and doubtless she will do so before long. An Italian company has been started to manufacture steel wholesale by our Bessemer process. Now, in a few years, steel will supersede iron completely. It will be used for boilers, for rails, for machinery. All iron will not make good steel; that of Elba is exceedingly suitable for the purpose. They say that the progress of the great European nations in iron-working represents their relative political importance. Without at all endorsing this statement, we may say that England, where some of the great blast-furnaces turn out as much as ninety tons a day, gives Italy an example herein which she will do well to follow. Rivalry of this kind would be truly useful to both nations. We are not so perfect but that we could learn; truth and chaste simplicity of design we seem never able fully to accomplish; here the Italian love of the beautiful might stand us in good stead.

But we must return for a few moments to Elba, and just look around us before sailing away. The island has other mineral riches besides its iron mines. Being made up chiefly of granite (of various epochs—granites are not, as we used to be taught, all of one date), it naturally furnishes that kaolin which comes from the decomposed granite rock, of which Cornwall sends so much to our pottery districts. Here is another branch of industry ready to the hands of the emancipated Italians. When we remember what they did in this way in the middle ages—how even fayence, common pottery, takes its name from Faenza—we feel sure the kaolin will not all be exported. Of course granite blocks are shipped from Elba, as they were in Roman times. The island also largely exports statuary and other marbles: its calcareous deposits, subjected to the action of the igneous rocks, have been very generally "altered" into marble. Thus, all things considered, Napoleon's little empire was not such a bad place after all.

There are of course many traditions about him in the island. He was always watching the roadstead, where there were, naturally enough, plenty of English cruisers. Yet he was not idle; he had not lost heart, as at St. Helena. He found work for his soldiers in making grand roads along and across the island; he opened fresh mines; cleared out and put in working order, old marble quarries; began to excavate on Monte-Giore, the site of Jupiter Ammon's temple. The very day that he sailed away he left special orders with his gardener about altering certain flower-beds. The people liked him. "He used to make twenty-franc pieces as common as half-crowns," said an old cicerone. Yet they did not cinge to him. "Who is this Napoleon that he puts us under tribute?" said the Senate of Capoliveri, when he wanted to exercise his imperial power of taxing his subjects. There was very nearly a drawn battle between the ex-Emperor and the men of the town, which boasted that it held charters dating from Roman times. Without exaggeration, Rio-Marina has parchments of the thirteenth century. The island has suffered cruelly from pirates, Saracens, and others, both before and since Barbarossa's time; and by way of compensation its rulers, whoever they might be, ruled lightly, and respected the old privileges of a set of men who had supplied Italy with iron for some two thousand five hundred years.

On the whole, Elba is a very interesting place to visit during a Mediterranean cruise. The scenery is by no means contemptible; indeed, the colouring of the bare granite and serpentine rocks is magnificent—perfectly Oriental in type. The botanist, too, will find much to interest him; the island belongs to the same botanical group with Corsica, Sardinia, and the Balearic Isles—a link between Italy and Spain. To those who have seen our own iron districts (and they are not all who go cruising in the Mediterranean), it will be interesting to compare our highly improved methods with the simple plan of operations adopted here, simple, but wasteful as well. At Calamita, for instance (which takes its name from the Italian word for magnetic iron ore—it was calamite by which the mariners of Amalfi guided their barks)—at Calamita the ore is shot down from the rock a height of over sixty yards on the beach, about half being lost by rolling away, pounding to dust, falling into the sea, &c. Strangely enough, the greater number of the workmen just now are political exiles, *manutengoli di Napoli*, the least desperate among the Calabrian brigands. They were starving here on the fourpence a day which government allows them, when it was proposed that they should be allowed to work in the mines. The American war was felt even in this corner of the world. Among the ships of all nations loading in the roads, there have been several Yankees whom dread of the Alabama kept from going into open sea, and who employed their forced leisure in carrying cargoes of iron to Marseilles.

Whether Elba will ever deserve again its old

name of *Æthalia*, which the Greeks gave it when it blazed over the nightly sea with Etruscan furnaces, is doubtful. The island was then, no doubt, thickly wooded. Now it is very bare of fuel. However, coal can be sent cheaply by sea, and in our own country we see, in the case of the Westbury iron-earth, that it pays to bring fuel to the ore if only the ore is rich enough. We have already taught the Elbane something. They used to neglect the old refuse-heaps lying in the Etruscan and Roman workings, till some English captains begged to be allowed to take them away as ballast. It was then found that, after a little washing to get rid of the accumulated clay, this rubble was very good ore. It now sells at nearly seven shillings the ton, the price of freshly-dug ore being not quite nine shillings.

We recommend every one who is exploring Tuscany, or sailing about in the Mediterranean, to pay a visit to Elba. It is at least as interesting as Malta, with its "joys of La Valette—Sirocco, sun, and sweat." It has a history too, as well as the Island of the Knights of St. John. Once nearly half its population was carried off by the pirate Barbarossa; many of them being rescued and restored, when, in 1535, Charles the Fifth took Algiers. The wretched weakness of these Italian coasts, left undefended during the rule of Appiani, Visconti, Buoncompagni, and the like, sufficiently explains the sullen indifference with which the peninsula submitted to Spanish domination.

But we do not mean to be political. To those who can, we say "Go and see Elba for yourselves." To those who cannot, we recommend M. Simonin's "monograph." It is lively and truthful.

A BLACK AFFAIR.

WELL, thank 'e, sir, I don't mind if I do. A little drop of rum, sir, if you please. Rum's my favourite liquor. I always think, sir, that there's more for your money, like, looking at it from all points. As regards quantity, it is not equal to gin, but, considering the colour and the flavour, it comes as near brandy as you could expect for fivepence a quartern. Here's fortune, sir.

How long have I been in the line? Close upon five-and-twenty years. You may know about the time when I tell you that Jim Crow was all the go; that's a pun, ain't it, sir? My mates tells me that I could write one of them Christmas bulesques stunning. You won't mind if I pun, sir, for I'm fond of fun, sir, and, between you and me, I like a bun, sir, as sure as a gun, sir. You see, it comes natural to me, like. Well, as I was a saying, it is about five-and-twenty years since I first took to the darkey business. I was a bit of a boy then, and did Jim Crow all over the country. I what you may call propagated him. When Dan Rice went into the country, he found I had been before him. All the boys and gals, sir, were

turning about and wheeling about and doin' just so, long before they saw Dan. I was the man, sir, that spoilt his plan, sir, for I was the boy that could can, sir. Well, sir, I won't pun, if you don't like it. But as I was a saying, sir, I made my first appearance in Jim Crow—little Jim Crow they called me—in a black face and a white pair of trousers. Lor' bless you, sir, what a thing is experience! At that time of day we used to black our faces with sut and tallow-grease, not knowing no better, but since then, sir, such is the march of intellect, sir, science has revealed burnt cork, which is simple and highly innoxshus. Whatever there may be a wanting, sir, to man here below, it's not cork. According to my experience of life, cork is everywhere, but I regret to say not bottles with something in them. But cork is all pervading, and with lucifers, which is also a universal element, there you are with Ethiopia in your waist-coat-pocket!

I began with the bones; rose rapidly, owing to my native genius, to the tambourine, advanced with giant strides to the banjo, and at last attained to the proud eminence of the concertina. I might have retired on a computeuce long before now, sir, if it hadn't been for the—; but why should I mention the word? What is it that conquers all mankind and makes cowards of us all, as Shakespeare observes? What is it? Why the fee-males. Hellen was the cause of Rob Roy's destruction, as the song says. The fee-males was the ruin of me; at least one feemale was. And that fee-male was my wife.

She was a fine woman, sir, and she *is* a fine woman, as ever you would desne to clap your eyes upon in a summer's day; a foot and a half taller than me, but no ambition, and such a rasping temper. For you, sir, or any gent as wasn't professional, she would have been just the thing. Tall, sir, high action, a fine figure-head, and a mole on her left cheek, but domestic. That's where we didn't hit it—she was domestic; and when a woman as is married to a professional is domestic, she can't a-bear you to be out of her sight. When you are away performing she gets jealous; not of anybody in particular, as far as I can make out, but of the public in general. A domestic wife, sir, in my walk of life, sir, tends to strife, sir—beg your pardon, I'm sure, sir; but it's a natural genius which there's no keeping down; always was witty, sir; can't help it.

My wife turned out downright unreasonable. She was for regular hours in the business. "Ten to five, or a little arter," she used to say, "is very good hours for a man to be in business, and a married man ought to be home and a-bed by ten o'clock." Well, you know, sir, in my line, that sort of thing won't do. Nigger serenading ain't like the Bank of England or Somerset 'Ouse. If Hop Light Loo is your line, you must do the best you can; and if you want a sweetheart, why darkey is your man. Leastwise, sir, I mean that in my line you can't choose your

hours, and you can't choose your district. On Lord Mayor's Day you may earn enough for a week in an hour or two, up a court about the Old Bailey, when the people are waiting to see the procession. But then every day of the year ain't the ninth of November. As a rule, there's nothing to be done in the nigger line until after dinner. Organs is the only thing in that way that people will stand directly after breakfast. You want a good foundation of roast beef or pork and something to drink, before you are in a humour for the niggers. And do you know, sir, I fancy that the more people have to drink, the better they like our performance. And so it is, sir, that our best time is at night about an hour before the public-houses close. As the Latin poet says, sir: *In vino veritas*. Well, I used to do a very good night business with our troupe, of which, being the concertina, I was the head and director, a very good business, sir, until I got married. But I hadn't been married a week, before Mrs. G. began to row me about being out late at night.

"My dear Maria," I says to her, "it's business; it's your living, my dear, and mine too."

"Don't tell me," she says; "there's no proper business to be done at this time of night, and if I had known the sort of life you was going to lead me, I shouldn't have married you."

"Well, Maria," I would say to her, "I'm sure I never deceived you as to my line of life."

"You told me you was a hartist," she says.

"I did," I says; "but did I ever deceive you as to the nature of the hart? Didn't I tell you in a honourable and straightforward manner that I was in the musical way, that my instrument was the concertina, and my spear of life the streets? It is true," I says, "that I came a-courting you in a clean face and my best Sunday-going suit; but when you remarked a black rim round my neck, didn't I make a clean breast of it, and confess to the burnt cork on my bended knees? And what did you say to me, Maria? Didn't you take me by the 'and, and say, 'Rise, Joseph, rise; it does not become you to kneel thus to a fragile woman? 'Love,' you says, 'is superior to a little sut, and I'd love *you* all the same if you was the Hottentot Venus.'"

Yes, sir, I was candid with Maria, and I was candid with her family, which had been in the ironmongery line and seen better days, but was now reduced through misfortunes. It is true that Maria's ma kept a mangle, presented to her by subscription by the members of her dutiful family, and that her pa, being unequal to exertion, was in the workhouse; but, having paid taxes and kep their own chay in better times, I knew what was due to them, and, on aspiring to Maria's 'and, stated all circumstances—birth, parentage, profession, and average earnings.

I remember well, sir, what the old gentleman said to me on the wedding-day. I went down to the workhouse for him at ten o'clock, and

brought him up in a cab to give his daughter away. And he gave her away, sir, cheerfully—which was very generous of him, considering that she was all his property. And, coming out of church, the old gentleman says to me.

"Joseph," says he, "things has been said, but not by me. Mind, it wasn't me as said Maria was going to marry beneath her. There's no pride about me; but the old woman, you know, was connected with the aristocracy, a house where a footman was kep, and, though brought down, Joseph, her notions are high. She didn't quite like it at first, and might have said something. But don't you take any notice she'll be reconciled to it in time."

So she was, sir; for the very next Sunday the old lady invited me and Maria to tea, and we took our own tea and sugar, and a new cottage loaf, and warmed the old lady up with a glass of six ale, and she was reconciled in no time. So you can't say there was any family misunderstanding, can you, sir? It was all fair and square; Maria knew what I was, and the family knew what I was, and they took me for what I was.

Maria could not deny it; yet often when I went home late she'd go into high strikes, fly at me like a cat and tear my clothes off my back, get hold of the tails of my coat—them long comic tails as we wear, sir—and off they'd come like tinder; then she'd make a grab at my hair, but that being a horsehair wig, deceived her, and only aggravated her the more, when she'd chuck the wig in the fire and seize me by the real hair, pulling out handfuls. There was no pacifying her, sir; soft words weren't a bit of use. I've took home something nice for supper, thinking that would prevent a row; but it didn't. Once, it was a bit of boiled pork and peas-puddin', and she took up the peas-puddin' in handfuls and threw it at me like mud. Peas-puddin' ain't a nice thing, sir, to be compo'd with. I've took her home a velvet bonnet all over roses and ribbons, and she's danced upon it, sir.

When I've been very late, and frightened to go home, I've got two or three of my mates to go in with me; sometimes I've took the whole troupe. But Lor' bless you, sir, it wouldn't have made no difference if I had gone home guarded by a regiment of soldiers, or a whole division of the police. Maria let us have it all round, generally with the banjo over the head. You see she had no sympathy with hart, sir, didn't understand it. Her idea of work was washing, and ironing, and cleaning up the house. "Fine thing for you," she would say, "gallivanting about, seeing pleasure, while I'm at home here, toiling and slaving." As a general rule, sir, I don't think women understand hart.

But the worst of it was that all this interfered with business. I'm a man that likes peace and quietness myself, and I'd do anything rather than have a row. I've sat many a night in the cold on the stairs, waiting for Maria's temper to cool down. But if you tread upon a worm, sir, it will turn, especially if you interfere with it in business, and humiliate it before the public at large. And that's what Maria did more than

once. She followed our troupe about to see what I was up to, and when I was going round with the hat, making my best bow and saying soft nonsense to the gals, she'd drop down upon me like a flash of lightning, and fetch me a crack on the side of the head that made me spin again. In private, a man as is fond of peace and quietness may take that sort of thing, but when it comes to a public performance, it ain't to be put up with. A professional man, sir, must stick up for himself before the public, though I am bound to say that always when Maria dropped down upon me in that way, the public laughed. I had it in my mind more than once to give Maria in charge, but I never could. She's a sort of woman, sir, that when you look at her it's all over with you—tall, sir, a fine figure-head, and such a stepper! But she ruined the night business, and all through her I had to lose the country business in the summer. There's a good bit of money to be picked up in the season at the watering-places, such as Margate and Ramsgate. But I never could go; Maria wouldn't let me.

"If *you* go, Joseph," she used to say, "*I* go."

Well, of course I couldn't drag Maria about with me over the country; it would have been double expense, and hartists in our line don't always find it easy to get lodgings. Ours, sir, is an awkward pocket to suit as regards rent. And being professionals, we like to keep ourselves quiet when we retire into private life. It wouldn't do for public characters like us to go to the Royal Hotel.

Well, the consequence was that my mates went without me, and I was left in London at the dull season of the year to do the best I could single-handed. But one nigger ain't no use, sir; it's true the concertina is scientific, but without the banjo and the bones it's nothing. I did very bad, and could get little more than a crust. But Maria didn't care. Her maximum always was, better a crust of bread-and-cheese and be home and a-bed at ten o'clock, than boiled rabbit and sprouts with gallivanting.

It was all jealousy. Yet I never give her any occasion, sir. Never. Of course I palavered the gals, and I dare say sometimes gammoned them out of their missus's beer-money; but it was in the way of business. It wasn't love, sir, it was ha'pence.

What I am going to tell you now, sir, is a great event, and I dare say some day it will be mentioned in history.

I had been playing about at the West-end all day, and had taken only about a couple of shillings. It was well 'on in the dull season; the nob's were still out of town, and the servant girls had spent all their board wages. I had been playing and singing for nearly an hour without getting e'er a copper. "It's no use," says I to myself; "I'll shut up and go home." So I popped the concertina into its case and started off, thinking, as I generally do when I'm in bad luck, that I might possibly find a purse or a bundle of notes lying in the road. Well, sir, just as I was turning out of Belgrave-

square I saw something white lying on the pavement. My heart was in my mouth. I thought it was the bundle of notes at last. But it wasn't. It was only a lady's cambric handkercher. But that was worth something, for it had lace all round it, and a coronet embroidered in the corner. I am no judge of lace myself, but I thought by the coronet that it was likely to be the real thing. So I put the handkercher in my pocket, and said nothing to nobody. I intended to give it to Maria when I got home; but she had a little bit of supper ready, and was so pleasant and agreeable, that I quite forgot all about it. I went to bed without mentioning the handkercher.

As I was dozing off, Maria, who had stopped up to put things to rights, suddenly came up to the bedside and shook me. "Joseph," she said.

"Well," I said, "what is it?"

"Joseph," she repeated; and I knew by her tone that there was something up.

I opened my eyes, and saw Maria standing beside me with the handkercher in her hand. She had been to my pockets and found it.

"What's this?" she said.

"A handkercher," I said.

"A handkercher!" she said. "Whose handkercher?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," I said. "I picked it up in the street, and was going to give it to you, only I forgot it."

"How do you look, Joseph, when you're telling a lie?" she said.

"What do you mean?" I said.

"I'll tell you what I mean," she said. "Some woman give you this, Joseph. I've suspected you for some time; but you can't deceive me, now I have the hocklar proof."

"Oh, how can you think such a thing, Maria?" I said. "I'm sure I never gave you any cause."

"This handkercher!" she said; and she looked at me quite awful.

Well, sir, I took a bitter oath that I had picked it up, but she wouldn't have it.

"Why, what nonsense," I said; "it's real lace, and got a coronet in the corner. I dare say it belongs to a duchess."

"Ah," she says; "it ain't the first time I've heard of duchesses falling in love with professionals. Joseph, you're a willin'."

It cut me to the quick to be called a name like that, and me innocent as an unborn babe. But nothing would pacify her. She worked herself up into high strikes in no time. Thinking that she would soon cry and kick herself out, I lay quiet, and never said a word. But that wouldn't do. She got up in a fury, threw my wig into the fire as usual, stamped upon my serenading hat, and then pulled all the clothes off me. She went on like a mad woman, sir, and roused the whole house.

"I'll go home to my parents," she said.

"Don't be foolish," I said. "You know your ma is out a washing, and the workhouse is shut long ago; they won't let you see the old gentleman to-night."

"This comes of marrying one beneath me in station," she said.

Now she had never said that to me before; but I knew now that it had been buried in her breast, and that she had been thinking of it for years.

"Oh, Maria," I said. "I never thought that you would have thrown that up in my face. If you do come of a high family," I said, "love's a leveller."

"Love!" she says; "do you dare to talk to me of love, false one?"

"I ain't a false one, Maria; I'm your true loving 'usband," I said.

"The handkercher!" she said, holding it up like an accusing spectre. "Go to your duchess, go!" And with that she flounced out of the room, and sat half the night on the stairs a weeping and sobbing and beating the boards with her heels, so that nobody could get a wink of sleep in the 'ouse.

When she came up in the morning, she was as cold as a frog, but quiet. She never spoke all breakfast-time; but, after I had blucked my face, and just as I was cutting a paper collar, she rises, and draws herself up to her full height, and says:

"Joseph," she says, "I'll never live under the same roof with you no more. I'll have a divorce."

"Very well," I says; "if that's your temper, have a divorce. Only it strikes me that it won't run to it, unless you have a good deal more money than we've got," I said.

All I had, sir, was one-and-fivepence-half-penny, and though I knew that divorces had been much reduced in price, I didn't think they had come down so low as that.

"Don't you think," I said, "it would be cheaper to refer it to arbitration? I don't mind standing by what your pa says."

"Oh, I dare say," she said; "you and pa are very thick, because you give him bacca. I choose ma."

"Very well," I said; "you have ma and I'll have pa."

So that was agreed upon, and Maria put on her bonnet and went off for her ma, and I, without waiting to wash the black off my face, went across to the workhouse for the old man.

The first thing the old gentleman said, on getting outside the gates, was, "Ain't we going to take a cab, Joseph?"

"No, father," I says, "cabs is for weddings; but it's divorce that's on to-day; and under those circumstances you don't feel inclined to go to the expense."

The old gentleman being rather weak on the pins, it took us some time to get down to the Brill, where I lodged, and Maria and her ma were there waiting for us.

"Here you are," I said; "here's my referee."

"And here's mine," said Maria, pointing to her ma, who, having her sleeves up, had evidently been summoned away in the midst of her washing.

"Now," I said, "go ahead."

Well, sir, of course Maria had no facts to

go upon, except that she had found the handkercher in my pocket. I tore the case for the prosecution all to tatters, and Maria hadn't got a rag to stand upon, except the handkercher.

"Now," I says, "pa, what's your verdict?"

"Not guilty," he says, without leaving the box.

"Hear, hear," I says. "And what's yours, ma?"

"Well," she says, talking quite proud, just like her daughter, both having been at boarding-school, "I should like to see the handkercher."

Maria showed her the handkercher.

"Why," she says, "it's the finest cambric, with real lace round it; it's worth half a guinea, if it's worth a penny."

"Very well, then, mum, what do you say?"

"Well," replied Maria's ma, "I say pawn it."

"Them's my sentiments exactly," I says; "pawn it, and let's have rumpsteak and onions for dinner."

Maria vowed that her own flesh and blood had turned against her; but when I brought in a quarter of rum and a pint and a half of old ale, and she'd had a drop, she came round a little, and at last agreed to go out and pawn the handkercher. She got seven-and-sixpence on it; and we had a nice bit of hot dinner, and the old gentleman got quite convivial and, sang Away with Melancholy, and we passed as pleasant an afternoon, sir, as I'd wish to see.

After that, happiness, sir, was restored to my domestic hearth; only I couldn't help thinking that things was a deal too pleasant to last. Maria was all sugar, never scolded, never was jealous, and was always singing. I couldn't make it out at all. Formerly she had despised my line of hart, and called my songs nonsense and rubbish. But now she was a singing of them every day, and beautiful she sang them too; especially Lucy Neal, and the Old Folks at Home, which was all the go then. I never thought that she had such talent.

But what's her little game? I thought to myself. She's dropped the jealousy, and she's dropped the words, and though she doesn't say much, she's always a singing, and two or three times when I come in unexpected, I caught her putting away some finery that she'd been making, as if she didn't want me to see it. When I caught her hiding that finery, sir, I thought of the young man at the tripe-shop. I'll tell you how that was, sir. One day, when we had half a peck of peas and Maria was shelling them, she found a shuck with nine peas in it.

"I'll put that over the door," she said, "and the first man as comes in will be my second 'usband."

It was just after we had had a noise about my stopping out late that she said this. Well, sir, the first person as come in was the young man from the tripe-shop. And Maria says to him, right before me,

"George," she says, "you are destined to be my second 'usband."

I don't mind confessing, sir, that I had a touch of the green-eyed monster myself. One

afternoon, when I came in to my bit of dinner, there was nobody in the room. I knocked at the door of the lodger on the same landing, a young woman in the shoe-binding line, and asked if she knew where my missus was? "All right," she says; "she'll be with you directly."

I went back to my room and sat down, and in about five minutes the door opened and somebody came in. I looked round and saw before me—what do you think, sir? A tall woman, dressed in a short red petticoat, with a turban on her head, and her face blacked!

There was no mistaking that figure-head. It was Maria.

"How do you like me now?" she says.

"Why, Maria," I says, "whatever are you up to?"

In answer to that, sir, she whips up an old tambourine, and strikes up

Rosa, Rosa, Sambo come,
Make a little fire in de back room;
Oh, Rosa, coal black Rose,
I wish I may be burned
If I don't love Rose.

And then she did the tambourine with her thumb, and jingled it to the time, and banged it against her head and elbows just as if she had been born to it.

"Will that suit?" she says.

"Why, Maria," I said to her quite serious, "what *does* this mean?"

"Well," she says, "it means, Joseph, that I don't think you draw by yourself; and I'm going to help you. What you want," she says, "is the fee-male element in your performances."

"And do you mean to say, Maria, that you're going out with me in the streets like that?"

"Yes," she says, "I do mean to say it. In future, Joseph, where you go, I go. I'm sure it will improve the business, and being with you, I can always have my eye upon you."

And she did go out with me, sir; and that was how fee-males was first introduced into the nigger serenading business. Lots of fellows have claimed the honour of the invention; but it was me as did it, me and Maria.

There's lots of fee-males in the profession now, but Maria was the first; and if you are in the History line, perhaps you will be good enough to put it down.

Thank you, sir, the same as before, with lemon.

SOWING THE DRAGON'S TEETH.

CADMUS, Agenor's son, the dragon slew,
Hard by the cliff, a monster fierce and vast,
O'ershadowing half Parnassus; herds and men
Had fled his hot breath, helpless and aghast.
Exulting in that conquest, helmeted and plumed,
Glittering like Mars, fresh from the battle-field,
The hero shook his ponderous ashen spear,
And waved in the blue air his golden shield.

Disdaining help from either gods or men,
Forgetting Heaven in his boastful pride,
He sought a herdsman's shed and seized the plough,
The goad, and harness shaped from tough bull hide,

And led the large-eyed oxen, crescent horned,
Huge dappled creatures, stalwart, strong of limb,
And drove them to the plain; his Spartan dogs,
Both tired and sullen, lagging after him.

The lowering purple slowly deepening gloomed,
And darkened blacker in the furthest west;
The rooks flew by in drifting funeral lines
Below the eagle's long-since plundered nest.
Then suddenly a gleam of orange fire
Lit up beneath the lowest vapoury bar,
And burnt a gap out, fading gleam by gleam,
Till sparkled forth the first keen evening star.

On went the cleaving share, sharp beaked and keen,
Rippling the fallow in long level rows,
Tearing the sluggish clay with tooth of steel;
Out like a puffing sail his mantle blows,
As 'tween the stilts bends Cadmus at his toil,
Trenching the fresh black earth, and showers of seed
Tossing behind him on the soft rich soil.

Sowing the dragon's teeth; but Jove, intent
To check such pride, now blotted star by star,
And cast forth winds over the new-ploughed lands,
That swept with wild beast howling from afar.
The storm-clouds rolled in billows swift and black,
And slanting rain beat fiercely from the south,
While splashing fire high, high upon the crag,
Lit with a glare each lurid cavern's mouth.

The very mountain torrents shone with flame,
As Cadmus stood beside the steers intent,
Resting the plough and leaning on his goad.
The sky was wrapped in fire, and lightning went
Splintering against Parnassus, then the earth
Teemed with long lines of warriors, file on file,
Gleaming in phalanx threatening to close,
And stretching o'er the plain, mile after mile.

But Cadmus to Minerva knelt and prayed,
Then slew the oxen, and, with cloven plough,
Offered to the wise goddess sacrifice,
And raised his hands to her and bent his brow.
So Zeus relented, and a war began
Between those warriors of the dragon's seed;
Keen swords flash out, and hissing javelins fly,
Helms split, and bucklers cleave, and many bleed.

On tramped the phalanx, as the spearmen ran
Fast to join battle, and the bowmen drew
Up to the head their shafts, and clouds of darts
Poured on the vanguard, while hoarse trumpets blew,
And on the shield smote fast the crashing axe,
While banners rose and fell above the slain;
And shouts of wounded giants filled the air,
And charging swordsmen fought o'er that wild plain.

Far as the eye could reach were grappling men;
Long ranks of struggling warriors, lance to lance,
And sword to sword, in the dim twilight moved
Like frenzied vision in a madman's trance;
Legions of warriors rose from out the dark
With supernatural strength, and with the wrath
Of the old giants smitten down by Jove.
Soon the black earth grew red, and red each path.

They fell in swathes, like corn before the steel
Of hurried reapers; ere the sun arose,
They sank where they had risen, rank by rank,
File facing file; then clearer grew the sky,

And out the stars came sparkling, as the moon
Launched from the cloud-bank; Cadmus swiftly then
Strode back to Thebes, and after him like slaves
Came the survivors of those dragon men.

AIR.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

It is solely through the impressions conveyed to us by our senses that we know what we do know. Passions and propensities may be innate and instinctive, but all knowledge of facts and things is acquired.

Much of what our senses acquaint us with, are not material substances. Thus, light, electricity, heat,* sound, are not things, but motions. Formerly, with the exception of sound, they were called imponderable fluids. Imponderable, unweighable, in truth they are; but instead of being fluids, they are forces. They are the life of the universe, its manifestation of vitality. And—as to weighing them—one force, attraction or gravitation, is the source and origin of all weight.

Other objects whose existence is disclosed to us by our senses—the earth, the waters, the woods, and the winds—are tangible, material, ponderable. They are things which have weight and substance, being composed of what men have agreed to call matter, in distinction to spirit.

There are three forms of matter known to us; the solid, the liquid, and the gaseous. A fourth form is suspected, and more than suspected; namely, the ethereal, which is supposed to be to the lightest gas, what the lightest gas is to the densest liquid. It has been thought that all substances, all material things, may be capable of assuming each of these three forms, if placed under the required conditions. We see many objects in daily use pass through them all without difficulty. A lump of sulphur readily melts, and as readily passes off in fumes. Ice is easily converted into water, and water as easily into steam. Camphor speedily takes its departure, leaving no residue behind. In a closed glass jar, it is volatilised, and then re-solidified upon the sides of the jar. What is still more curious, one substance, usually seen in the form of gas, carbonic acid, may be reduced to a fluid state, and then, by artificial freezing, to a solid. Therefore, although we are ignorant of the conditions required to transform hydrogen gas, for instance, to a liquid or a solid, we have no right to assume that such a transformation is impossible. All we can say is, that hydrogen is known to us only in the gaseous state.

The air we breathe is a permanent gas, and has never been made liquid, still less solid. It does not change its state, to whatever circumstances of temperature and pressure it is subjected. It has neither taste nor smell of its own, only what it borrows from foreign bodies with which it is laden.

Air is said to be invisible and colourless; which is correct only when it is presented to the eye in small, or limited quantity, of equal temperature throughout its mass, and laden with a proper proportion of watery vapour varying with that temperature. Otherwise, air is perfectly visible. We see its colour in the azure sky; we see its substance in the purple veil which hangs between us and the distant mountain. We see it when certain conditions of dryness (as during some easterly winds) diminish its transparency. We see it when, in the shape of a mirage, it assumes the semblance of a sheet of water. Whenever two strata of air of considerably different temperatures come in contact (as when a cool breeze blows over heated sands, or on the top of a burning brick-kiln, or by the side of a furnace chimney), we see the two airs trying to mingle, as clearly as we see white syrup, still undissolved, curling and circling in a glass of water. We see what air holds in clouds, fogs, mists, and hazes. We see the air in the glowing tints which it refracts in the west and reflects in the east after the sun is below the horizon. When the sky is clear, we behold the air in sunsets and sunrises, as distinctly as we behold a diamond in its sparkling.

“As light as air” is a proverbial expression. Air, nevertheless, is heavier than is generally imagined. It presses on us with a load of fifteen pounds on every square inch of surface of our bodies, although we do not so much as suspect its weight. The reason why we do not feel the pressure is, because the air penetrates everywhere; it presses in all directions, both within and without our organs. The result of the equilibrium of the two pressures is as if they did not exist at all.

With the barometer at thirty inches and the thermometer at freezing-point, a cubic foot of dry air weighs more than an ounce and a quarter. The weight, therefore, of the air contained in any apartment of respectable dimensions amounts to something considerable. The total weight of the entire atmosphere is equal to that of a solid globe of lead sixty miles in diameter.

That air has weight, is proved by a very simple experiment. A bottle, from which the air is exhausted, is weighed. Air is allowed to fill it; it is then weighed again, and an augmentation of weight is perceptible. The proof strikes one as being of the easiest; but to carry it out, two instruments were necessary which science did not possess in the olden time, namely, an air-pump, and an exact and delicate balance. In handling a bladder full of air, we do not feel the weight of the contents. We only feel the weight of the bladder, because we are handling it *in air*. A similar effect would be produced on handling a bladder full of water *in water*; the weight of the water would be imperceptible.

Air also strikes us as being lighter than it really is, in consequence of its elasticity. There is a springiness in its contact which immediately conveys the idea of great legerity. When we see the boundings of a ball filled

* See Fire, All the Year Round, vol. vi. p. 393.

with air, or feel the supple yieldings of an air-cushion; when a warm and gentle breeze fans our cheek, we say to ourselves, "How light the air is!" but when we have to meet it in a storm, or a hurricane, we perceive at once that it has something besides velocity, and that it must have also weight to give it the momentum which it is capable of exerting with such crushing effect. It is the pressure of the air which enables the calf to suck its mother's milk, the leech to gorge itself with blood, and the fly to walk up the pane of glass. The pressure of the atmosphere even adds heartiness to the application of a kiss.

And yet the ponderousness of air was denied by the ancients! It was regarded as an illusion of the senses. The boldest free-thinkers ventured no further than to entertain their doubts. Galileo first discovered the weight of air, inferring it from the fact that water, in pumps, remained arrested and suspended at a height of about thirty-three feet. After him, Torricelli, and then Boyle (the inventor of the air-pump), confirmed his ideas by further experiment. In the seventeenth century, Pascal had demonstrated the material existence of air by the mere force of reasoning, showing, in his *Abrégé sur le Vide*, that it is a tangible and heavy body.

During the first half of the last century, and before it, the notions about air were excessively crude. Satan was the Prince of Air, as the Queen's eldest son is the Prince of Wales; and his subjects, the witches, mounted on brooms, rode through his realms to attend his drawing-rooms. All gases were air, and the same; their differences were not known. There was merely the trifling distinction that some were respirable, and others fatal to the animals breathing them. No suspicion was entertained of the absorption and assimilation of the different gases by animals and vegetables. The air contained everything—the whole fossil (mineral), vegetable, and animal kingdoms; and nothing was ever taken out of it. For, an animal, when dead, being exposed to the air, is, in a little time, carried off, bones and all; vegetables, by putrefaction, become volatile; and all kinds of salts, sulphurs, and metals, convertible into fume, are thus capable of being mixed with the air. Well might Boerhaave take it for an universal chaos or colluvies of all the kinds of created bodies.

Air—elementary air it was called—was made of the vapour of the sun (and perhaps it is); it was condensed and thickened ether; it was mechanically producible, being nothing else than the matter of other bodies altered, so as to become permanently elastic. For, solid bodies, unsuspected of elasticity, being plunged in corrosive unelastic menstrua, would, by a comminution of their parts in the conflict, afford a considerable quantity of permanently elastic air. To account for its elasticity, some believed the corpuscles of air to be branched; others held them to be so many minute flocculi, resembling tufts of wool; others conceived them round.

like hoops; or curled in corkscrews, like shavings of wood; or coiled in spirals, like steel watch-springs; all which ingenious hypotheses are yet unconfirmed by the microscope, or otherwise. But, into what sloughs of absurdity does the human mind straggle when it follows fancy instead of observation! Air is here imaged, as its exactest types, by thickets of bushes, wool mattresses, sacks of shavings, and spring cushions.

Newton put the thing another way, attributing the elasticity of air to a repulsive force between its particles, after their original separation by heat. And indeed, of the two forces, attraction and repulsion, the latter would seem to reign amongst gases, the former amongst liquids. The particles which compose elastic fluids avoid each other as much as circumstances allow; those which make up liquids, hug each other as closely as they can; it requires the superior force of heat to cause a divorce between them.

"The atmosphere," from *ατμος*, vapour, means the sphere of vapours. Maury likens it to another ocean enveloping the entire world over the ocean of water, which covers only two-thirds of it. All the water of the one weighs about four hundred times as much as all the air of the other.

As to the height of the atmosphere, the received opinion is that its upper surface—if it has a surface—cannot be nearer to us than fifty, nor more remote than five hundred miles. But it is impossible to fix any precise limit, by reason of its growing tenuity, as it is released from the pressure of its own superincumbent mass.

It is something to know that more than three-fourths of the entire atmosphere is below the level of the highest mountains. The other fourth is rarefied and expanded, in consequence of the diminished pressure, until the height of many miles be attained. From the reflexion of the sun's rays after he has set, or before he rises above the horizon, it is calculated that the upper fourth part must extend at least forty or forty-five miles higher. Sir John Herschel has shown that, at the height of eighty or ninety miles, there is a vacuum far more complete than any which we can produce by any air-pump. In 1783, a meteor, computed to be half a mile in diameter, and fifty miles from the earth, was heard to explode. As sound cannot travel through a vacuum, it was inferred that the explosion took place within the limits of the atmosphere. Herschel thence concludes that the aerial ocean is at least fifty miles deep.

Maury's illustration of the way in which the atmosphere is packed, and of its diminished density as we ascend in it, is admirable.

If we imagine the lightest down, in layers of equal weight, and ten feet thick, to be carded into a pit several miles deep, we can readily perceive how that the bottom layer, though it might have been ten feet thick when it first fell, yet with the weight of the accumulated and superincumbent mass, it might now, the pit being full, be compressed into a layer of only a

few inches in thickness; while the top layer of all, being uncompressed, would be exceedingly light, and still ten feet thick: so that a person ascending from the bottom of the pit would find the layers of equal weight thicker and thicker until he reached the top.

Although one of their elements (oxygen) is the same, air and water have but few qualities in common; they are both transparent and both fluid; that is to say, mobile, not solid, and that is all. Yet so great is the affinity existing between these two very dissimilar bodies, whose common function is to sustain life, that neither water completely deprived of air, nor air completely devoid of water, is to be had except by chemical means. Thus the atmosphere is a grand reservoir; and the supply is afforded with such regularity, that the southern hemisphere has been likened to the boiler, and the northern to the condenser, of a still.

Hence, although the quantity of water contained in oceans, seas, and fresh-water lakes, strikes us at once as enormous, still there is more water in the world than meets the eye, or than is even suspected by mankind in general. Forests contain, in their tissues, millions upon millions of tons. The water and the air which are contained in living beings form so large a portion of their mass, that, if thoroughly dried and exhausted, they would become mere shrivelled scraps of skin and bone. Birds and insects are greatly indebted to air for their making up, and for their general portliness. The quantity of water which is visibly and invisibly held in the atmosphere, is incalculable.

Following out the discrepancies of the two, we find that water, so long as it continues water, shrinks and swells but slightly with change of temperature, and yields scarcely at all under outward force. Air, on the contrary, contracts and expands remarkably under the influences of cold and heat. It is elastic. There is no known limit to the degree of its condensation under pressure, nor to its rarefaction when pressure is removed. It adapts itself to, and fills, whatever extent of space it is allowed to occupy. The air-gun is a beautiful exemplification of this property. Condensed air, suddenly let loose, rushes out to acquire the state of ordinary air, with such force as to drive a bullet. Instead of the three forms so readily assumed by water, air undergoes no change in its constitution (except the different degrees of density and tenuity) through any of the ordinary influences by which it is affected; nor is any influence known capable of effecting such a change. The air's elastic force is like that of every other gas composed of molecules, which would run away from, and mutually shun, each other, if they were not prevented by the vessel which holds them, or the weight which compresses them. There is a great difference between the elasticity of gases and of solid bodies. When a gas ceases to be compressed, it is not only expanded, but it continues to occupy a greater space, and appears in a larger volume than before; whereas, solid elastic bodies, re-

lieved from compression, simply reassume the form and the size which they had before.

Water and air are both fluids; their particles move freely amongst each other in all directions. But one, as we have seen, is an elastic fluid, or gas; the other, a non-elastic fluid, or liquid. Gases mix readily; many liquids will not mix. Water mixes neither with mercury nor with oil. Water itself is not a mixture, but a chemical combination and union. It is not oxygen and hydrogen, but oxygen *with* hydrogen; whereas air is a mixture and not a chemical combination of gases. Consequently, air's pretensions to be called an element are much better founded than water's; for the great bulk of its mass is made up of uncombined elements which cannot yet be reduced to any simpler form.

Out of one hundred parts of atmospheric air ninety-nine and a half consist of oxygen and nitrogen or azote, mixed in the proportion of twenty-one of oxygen to seventy of azote, by volume, and of twenty-three to seventy-seven, by weight. It thus appears that the specific gravity of the two gases does not greatly differ. Oxygen is a trifle heavier, azote a trifle lighter, than air. In round numbers, it may be stated that air is mainly composed of one-fifth oxygen, and four-fifths azote.

Oxygen is the vital gas which serves for combustion, and is indispensable to animal life. If coals burn in a grate, it is the oxygen which keeps them burning. If you place a lighted candle under a bell-glass, it goes out as soon as it has consumed all the oxygen. If you put an animal under the same, as soon as it has breathed all the oxygen, it dies. It is the act of breathing atmospheric air which generates the heat that warms our bodies. Fire is produced by the oxygen contained in the atmosphere combining with other bodies, as wood and coal. Now hydrogen and carbon are also two grand combustibles. Either of them, combined with oxygen, becomes at once the parent of heat. When the oxygen gathered by the blood during its passage through the lungs reaches with it the other organs, it finds there hydrogen and carbon. It combines with them and produces warmth. Our breathing, therefore, is the same thing as lighting a gentle fire inside us. Instead of blowing the kitchen fire with a bellows, we draw the air into our lungs with the bellows of our chest. The whole secret of respiration or breathing is, that the oxygen of the air combines with the hydrogen and carbon of our bodies, and so gives rise to warmth. Cold-blooded animals are chilly, solely on account of the small quantity of oxygen required to keep them alive.

The remaining half-part of the hundred consists of carbonic acid and watery vapour, whose quantity varies according to season and locality. To verify the presence of carbonic acid, you have only to expose lime-water to the air; you will soon see a white film form on the surface, which is nothing else but carbonate of lime, that is, chalk. This small proportion of

carbonic acid amounts, in the aggregate, to an immense total. There is more than enough carbon in the atmosphere to replace all the coal that has been burnt since coal was discovered, besides supplying all the charcoal contained in every vegetable all over the world. Air also contains the vapour of water. If a cold and bright body, say a silver vase, is suddenly brought into warm air, you will very shortly see its surface dimmed by a coating of dew.

For our knowledge of the composition of air we are indebted to Lavoisier, whose experiments on this very body led him to the theory which bears his name, and which is the foundation of modern chemistry. That oxygen and azote make air, is thus demonstrated. Put mercury under a bell-glass filled with air, and then raise the mercury to a high temperature, but lower than its boiling-point. If this temperature be maintained for several days, the volume of air in the bell-glass will be found to diminish gradually, and at the same time there will be formed on the surface of the mercury little red scales, whose quantity will go on increasing. What takes place in this experiment? The reduced volume of air indicates an absorption, and the formation of a new body on the mercury suggests that the metal has appropriated to itself the portion of air which has disappeared. In fact, if the scales are collected and exposed to strong heat, they are transformed into mercury, after disengaging a gas which is found to be oxygen. Oxygen, therefore, exists in the air; its combination with the mercury gave rise, on the surface of the metal, to the body which is known as oxide of mercury.

By prolonging the operation for a sufficient length of time, a point is reached when there is no further diminution of air in the bell-glass, nor of scales in the mercurial bath; the cause of which is, that all the oxygen contained in the air has been absorbed by the metal. Nevertheless, the air has not entirely disappeared. There remains a gaseous residue under the bell-glass; and that residue is composed solely of azote. Air, therefore, is composed of oxygen and azote. If it contain any other gas in very small quantity, its presence is not betrayed in consequence of the trifling volume of the air experimented on.

The reader is reminded, only by way of remembrancer, that plants, under the stimulus of sunlight, take in and solidify carbonic acid, and give out oxygen. The leaves of the forest, the lichen on the rock, are strained out and stolen from the air. Air has such influence on vegetation, that there are plants which live and thrive with no other nourishment than air and the moisture it contains. 'Vegetation has the property of restoring to the atmosphere the corrupted, mephitic, and often mortal air in which vegetables are capable of living. By giving out oxygen and absorbing carbonic acid, plants render air salubrious to be breathed by animals. By an admirable reciprocity, the plant

grows and flourishes on what the animal rejects; and what the plant exhales; gives life to the animal.

REMINISCENCES OF BROGG.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER IV.

AND now, the first introduction to Mr. Brogg over, I found myself rapidly becoming friendly with the revered gentleman. I was a great deal with him, both at our club-room and also at his own house. It was a happy time—perhaps it was too happy to continue very long. I saw, and did not like, an occasional tendency to absence of mind and uneasy reflection in my friend. There appeared to be seasons when he was dissatisfied with his life, with his career, with himself. It was only occasionally, however, as I have said, that he fell into this condition, and in the intervals between such attacks we were very happy and comfortable.

A friend of ours—no other, indeed, than the immortal Grampus—was engaged in a lawsuit against one of his neighbours, *in re*, the barking of a dog, which animal the said neighbour kept tied up in his back garden; and it appeared that this dog was so fond of the sound of his own voice, that neither by day nor by night did he cease to give tongue, barking at all hours, and under all circumstances.

Now this dog-dispute, after being the motive of a long correspondence, beginning very politely and ending very savagely, became at last a matter for the lawyers, who, having got hold of it, determined to try the merits of the case before twelve English tradesmen of more than average stupidity. To the individual who kept the dog this lawsuit was simply a boon. He was a retired tradesman, with plenty of money and nothing to do, and finding inexpressible pleasure in making use of such expressions as "My solicitor will wait on you," or "You will hear from my solicitor," with the like imposing and alarming phrases. I think, moreover, that the "other party," namely, Grampus himself, also took pleasure in the thought that he was engaged in a lawsuit, talking of it freely wherever he went.

It had been suggested to Grampus by his lawyer that he should bring forward some gentleman deeply versed in intellectual matters, some person of high genius, in fact, to bear witness as to the detrimental influence on mental labour which such a noise as that of which Grampus complained might be expected to exercise; to prove, in short, that the nuisance *was* a nuisance, calculated to interfere with the artist's professional pursuits, and so, to some considerable extent, affect his pecuniary resources by hindering him in the exercise and practice of his profession. Of course Grampus was not long in perceiving that this was a case in which he must seek the assistance of our illustrious friend, nor was he slow to promise that assistance as quickly as it was asked. "If

my name can be of any use to you, my dear Grampus," said C. J., "I need hardly tell you how completely it is at your service." When Grampus told his legal adviser whose testimony he had secured, the lawyer looked a little blue, and remarked that he thought "some gentleman of greater ability would have been better for the purpose." Grampus broke out at this into a long tirade concerning the extraordinary abilities of C. J., and how nobody else living could serve his cause so well in the present emergency. But the lawyer seemed still unconvinced, and said that he should have preferred the testimony of Thunderson, or of Shammy, R.A., or somebody of that sort, very much indeed.

There was quite a little gathering of intellectual characters in the court on the day when Grampus's case was to come on. The habitués of Poets' Corner were all there to a man. There was a good deal of smiling and whispering (apparently facetious) among the gentlemen of the robe, as there often is when a cause of an unusual kind, and with no very momentous issue at stake, is about to come on.

The facetious tone was evidently to predominate in this case throughout. Even the counsel for the plaintiff, Grampus, fell very early into this line of business, and there was something, too, almost apologetical about his address, as if he really felt that it was a very unimportant business, and hardly worth all this disturbance. The artist, he said, belonged proverbially to the *genus irritabile*. He could not be judged by the same rules as other people. And if this was the case with the artist in general, he believed that he might say that it was specially so with this artist in particular, he being of a peculiarly nervous temperament, and very easily put off his intellectual feed—if he might so express himself—and incapacitated for thought and study. There was a great deal to this purpose, and the jury were asked if they knew what a dog was, and what the barking of a dog was, and whether the noise made by a barking dog was compatible with deep thought and serious meditation? And then the witnesses began to appear.

At length the moment came when Caractacus Jones Brogg was called. I had never before known what those initials C. J. stood for, and they rather staggered me. He ascended the witness-box steps with considerable dignity, and we thought to ourselves that now, at any rate, we should be serious.

The preliminaries of swearing the witness having been gone through, the witness was asked whether he was a friend of plaintiff's, how long he had known him, what he knew of his temperament, habits of life, and the like. And then Mr. Codger (the counsel for the plaintiff) thought he might get, without further delay, to matters bearing directly on the subject of the suit.

Mr. CODGER. And now, Mr. Brogg, I will, with your permission, ask you what, in your

opinion, would be the effect upon such a mind as that of your friend of the peculiar nuisance of which he is come here to complain?

WITNESS. My opinion is, that it would utterly incapacitate him for all mental exertion of what kind soever, and that it would render him generally irritable and unsettled.

MR. CODGER. Is it your opinion that my client would suffer in purse by such interruption?

WITNESS. Undoubtedly, seeing that he would be disqualified from pursuing those studies through whose agency his very exquisite works are produced.

MR. CODGER. You regard my client's works as works of great value?

WITNESS. I do.

MR. CODGER. They are a great deal sought after, I apprehend?

WITNESS. They are—ahem! ahem!—yes, a great deal sought after.

MR. CODGER. So that, in fact, if my client fails to produce these works for which he is so distinguished, he is failing to gain a certain sum of money which would otherwise have come to him?

WITNESS. Which in the event of the work finding a purchaser would certainly have come to him. Yes.

CODGER. Just so. Then it appears to you that the individual who by any means hinders my client from producing work, does in fact hinder him from receiving money?

WITNESS. Supposing, as I have said before, that the work on which he was engaged should find a purchaser when it was completed.

CODGER. (uneasily). Just so. Thank you, Mr. Brogg. I shall not require to trouble you any further.

But though the counsel for the plaintiff had done with Mr. Brogg, the counsel for the defendant had not, and he now rose with a very evil expression of countenance, to invite the witness's attention to a few questions of his own. The name of this gentleman was Screw, and he was considered a dab at cross-examination.

SCREW. Stop a moment, Mr.—eh,—Mr.—Brogg. There are one or two little matters which have come out in the course of your examination in chief, and in connexion with which I will, with your permission, put one or two very simple questions. It was the policy of my learned friend—and I will say that my learned friend is as bold as he is learned to adopt such a policy—to aim at convincing the jury that my client, by keeping a little dog upon his premises, hinders this Mr. Grampus from working. This point of course I shall presently be in a position to controvert, but for the present let it pass. My learned friend next goes a step further, and insinuates that to hinder this Mr. Grampus from working, is, in other words, to stand between this gentleman and the reception of certain sums of money of greater or less magnitude. Now this kind of language used by my learned friend gives us to understand that Mr. Grampus's pictures and money—sums of money—are convertible terms.

And here it is that I fail to follow my learned friend altogether, and here it is also, Mr. Brogg, that your assistance becomes valuable to me. You are, I believe, Mr. Grampus's friend—intimate friend?

WITNESS. I am.

SCREW. And, doubtless, you are acquainted with that gentleman's art-career from the very beginning?

WITNESS. I believe that I am.

SCREW. You believe that you are. Very good. Now, sir, you will doubtless be able to tell me whether certain information which I have received as to that career, from the highest source—mark me, Mr. Brogg, *from the very highest source*—is, or is not, correct. (The witness made no observation, and the learned counsel went on.) I have here a list of Mr. Grampus's works, compiled from the most accurate sources, and to which is appended an account of the ultimate fate of each one of the pictures. With your permission I will read the list over to you, and if there are any mistakes contained in it, you will, no doubt, be obliging enough to check me as I go on. ("Ahem! ahem!" coughed the learned counsel, making a prodigious noise; and then, getting out the inevitable double eye-glass, he went on.) Bonadicea haranguing the Britons stands first on my list, eighteen feet by ten, in the artist's possession.

WITNESS. It is *not* in the artist's possession, unhappily.

SCREW. Oh, indeed; not in the artist's possession? What, is it sold, then?

WITNESS. No, it is not sold.

SCREW. Not sold, and not in the artist's possession. May I ask what has become of this immortal work?

WITNESS. It has ceased to exist. (At this there was a roar of laughter.) The artist, in a moment of disappointment, destroyed the picture.

SCREW. Oh, very well; if the work has ceased to exist, we must get on to something else. I come next, then, to No. 2, Moses in the Bulrushes, fourteen feet by twelve, in the artist's maternal aunt's possession. (Laughter.) The artist, finding these large high-class works unsaleable, comes down very much in his notions, and gives in next, No. 3, a Reaper, two feet by eighteen inches, and this picture sells to a Mr. Green—of whom more hereafter. Am I correct, Mr. Brogg?

WITNESS. Entirely so.

SCREW. Then I will proceed with the list. No. 4, Murder of the Young Princes in the Tower, possession of the artist; No. 5, Ugolino, a study, possession of the artist; No. 6, Infant Minstrelsy, sold to Mr. Green; No. 7, The Misanthrope, possession of the artist; No. 8, Mariana, sold to Mr. Green; No. 9, Triumphs of Music, possession of the artist; No. 10, The Leper of the City of Aoste, possession of the artist; No. 11, Bagpipes at the Eternal City, sold to Mr. Green. Gentlemen of the jury, I

might go on, but it is needless. It is enough that I hold in my hand a list of the remaining works of Mr. Grampus, and that I assure you they are all either in the possession of the artist himself or that of this Mr. Green. But, gentlemen, this list does not show Mr. Grampus in the light of a prosperous artist. It cannot be contended that this gentleman, when engaged in producing these works, is, in reality, engaged in a process akin to the coining of money. Why, his works are all either in his own possession or in that of Mr. Green. And now, gentlemen, with one word more, we may dismiss this section of the subject. Who is this Mr. Green? Can you tell us anything about him, Mr. Brogg?

WITNESS. I had rather not say anything about Mr. Green.

SCREW. I can't help that, sir; you must. Come, Mr. Brogg, were you ever intimate with him?

WITNESS. Yes; at one time I may say that I was.

SCREW. Oh, you were; and did you like him?

WITNESS. Yes; I always found him very agreeable.

SCREW. You always found him very agreeable. Just so. Ever think him at all eccentric?

WITNESS. Well, he used to say queer things sometimes.

SCREW. Did you ever hear him say that he considered that the whole human race were spoiled by the possession of noses, and that he looked forward to the day when he should be entrusted (by commission) with the office of removing the feature in question from every human countenance?

WITNESS. Yes, I have heard him say that.

SCREW. Oh, you have! Did you ever hear him express any opinion on Mr. Grampus's works? Yes, yes; I dare say you'd rather not, but you must.

WITNESS. I have heard him say that he hated them, and only bought them because he felt too happy, and required something to make him uneasy.

SCREW. Very good, very good indeed, Mr. Brogg. Now, perhaps you are in a condition to say what is his present condition, and his place of abode? Perhaps you can tell us, Mr. Brogg?

WITNESS. With submission, I would rather not answer that question.

SCREW. Then, sir, I will answer it for you. Gentlemen of the jury, Mr. Green, the only patron of Mr. Grampus's art, is at this moment a pauper-lunatic in the wards of Colney Hatch Asylum. He suffers under a painful conviction that nature has gifted him with a tail.

At this there was a general roar of laughter, and our friend, wearing an expression of pain and disgust, was about to descend from the witness-box, when he was arrested by the voice of the dreadful Screw, who, it appeared, had not even yet done with him.

SCREW. Stop a moment, if you please, Mr.—Mr. Brogg. I must trouble you, I am afraid, with one or two questions on another matter.

You appeared just now to answer certain questions of my learned friend's as to the effect likely to be produced on Mr. Grampus's health of mind by the joyous barking of a little dog kept by his neighbour, my excellent client. Now, Mr. Brogg, as you have given your opinion upon this subject in an *ex cathedra* manner, and, in fact, as one of the initiated, I would fain take the liberty of asking you whether you are in the habit of painting pictures yourself?

WITNESS. Yes—that is, to some extent. I have painted—I should say I have begun—several pictures.

SCREW. Mr. Brogg, are you an artist?

WITNESS. Not exactly a professional artist, but I am acquainted—

SCREW. Not a professional artist. Exactly. Are you in any other way so engaged professionally, as to be able to speak authoritatively in this matter?

WITNESS. I am engaged in the study of the—of the law, to some extent.

SCREW. Oh, indeed. He! he! quite one of us. But, sir, you will allow me to say that your studies of the law, however slight or profound they may have been, can scarcely enable you to pronounce an opinion in such a case as the present. The fanciful—nay, almost playful—pursuit of the art of painting needs not that silence, that seclusion, that, I may almost say, awe-struck solitude which are needed for the carrying out of the majestic study of the law of England! No, sir. The two cases are not parallel, and I should have thought that, as a barrister—

WITNESS. I am not a barrister—not called yet—

SCREW. Oh, indeed, not a barrister—then you must allow me to say, Mr. Brogg, that in that position, even had this been a case of law-study and its hindrances, it would have been premature, if not presumptuous, in you to have expressed your opinion thus publicly. As it is—as it is—but let that pass. Have you, perchance, any other claim to be heard in a case of this sort?

WITNESS. I have been more engaged, I believe, in the study of literature than either that of law, or the art of painting. As one engaged in literary pursuits—as, in short, an author—I can testify to the necessity of quiet for the prosecution of literary labour, and as art and letters are sisters, I suppose that, to a considerable extent at any rate, what applies to one, applies also to the other.

SCREW. Stop a bit, stop a bit, Mr. Brogg. I was not aware that we had an author here. This is an unexpected honour. May I venture to ask in what direction your studies have been directed—what have been your principal works?

WITNESS. I have written a great many things. It would almost puzzle me where to begin.

SCREW. But are these all published? It is curious, but at this moment I do not remember the name—would you kindly refresh my memory by mentioning some one or two of your published works?

WITNESS. Oh, they are not published.

SCREW. Not published! And do you mean to tell me, sir, that you come here—that you come into court—that you appear before this extraordinarily intelligent jury in the capacity of an author, and one who is to give an opinion as an author, and that you are unable to point to a single published work bearing your name? Upon my word, Mr. Brogg, this seems to me to be a case bordering almost upon contempt of court. The boldness—and I might use a harsher word—of my learned friend seems to be contagious, and to affect even the very witnesses who appear on his side. Upon my word, sir, you must allow me to say that your appearance here this day has been altogether a false proceeding. You have come forward to give evidence in a case without, as far as I can see, having the very slightest claim to be heard. We have this day learned a great deal of what you are not—we have heard that you are *not* an artist, *not* a barrister, *not* an author. But we have heard nothing of what you *are*; and I would strongly recommend you, the next time you have to make your appearance in a technical case of this sort, to be quite sure that you know in what capacity you are appearing, lest you do as much harm to the cause which you desire to serve, as you have done this day to that of the plaintiff in this cause.

At this point, Mr. Codger, the counsel for the plaintiff, interposed, submitting that the remarks of the defendant's counsel were irrelevant. This caused a great deal of talking and browbeating, and mutual appeals to the "better feeling of learned friends," in the course of which the ill-used but distinguished subject of this memoir was allowed to descend from his unenviable eminence and to go whither he listed. Mr. Brogg left the court at once, and made his way, no doubt, to Poets' Corner. As to the trial, it went on as trials of this sort do. There was a great deal of what is called "chaff," and a great deal of laughter. The dog was brought into court, in order that the jury might test the quality of its bark for themselves, but the animal declining to give vent to any sound whatever, its introduction appeared to be something of a failure, till a facetious barrister, getting a furtive hold of its tail, caused it to utter such a volley of execrations howls as caused the court once more to be convulsed with laughter, and gave a "leg up" to the plaintiff's cause. Finally, and after a long day had been consumed in the investigation of a case which the judge pronounced both trivial and vexatious, a verdict was given for the defendant, who went out of court triumphant; the dog giving vent to such a volley of barks, that the foreman of the jury whispered to a friend that he thought they ought to go back and give the verdict the other way.

Mr. Grampus remarked quite quietly to those who stood about him that he had made up his mind, and should take the case into Chancery.

Mr. Grampus, however, did not eventually pursue this course. Perhaps he thought that

he had had enough of law, when the bills connected with his recent suit began to come in, not to speak of the costs and other trifles which fell to his share. Mr. Grampus was in no condition to deal with these little matters; the withdrawal of Mr. Green from the list of art-patrons having made a great deal of difference to him, and so it ended in the whole of these liabilities being paid off by that despised financier old Mr. Brogg; and I do believe that Grampus, in his secret heart, thought that the good man was only doing his duty, and that to be allowed to assist a genius like himself was quite a distinguished privilege for a City man.

But the most remarkable result of that Grampus trial—for I can attribute the phenomenon I am about to speak of directly to nothing else—was its effect upon the conduct of the illustrious person the incidents of whose earlier life I am now, as it were, touching upon. He seemed to be both moody and thoughtful, appeared little among us, and when he did, wore the air of one who is revolving some important matter in his head. We used to think that he had been so disturbed by the insolence of the disgusting cross-examiner Screw, as to be unable to recover himself. The painful light in which this wretched mountebank had managed to exhibit our noble and respected friend was preying, we thought, on that friend's mind. Of course we never spoke of these things—never alluded to the trial, or to anything connected with it, though we could none of us help feeling that it was in a great degree accountable for the change which we observed. How I got to detest that trial, and everything connected with it; the obstinate neighbour, who, by-the-by, wore an expression which was simply infernal when he heard the nature of the verdict; the dog, the judge, the jury, the counsel on both sides; the one was a brute, and the other an incapable; nay, I think I almost hated Grampus himself. "After all," I thought, "a man has no right to let himself get into that state of sensitiveness; it's morbid, to say the least of it."

The alteration in our revered friend appeared in many ways, but in none more remarkably than in his withdrawal of himself, to a great extent, from the society which still held its gatherings at Poets' Corner. Rarely did we see him there. He lived now almost entirely at his chambers in the Temple; and perhaps this was one reason why we saw so much less of him, but it was not all. He seemed to have conceived—incredible as it seems—a distaste for the society of our little knot of geniuses; and when he did come to the house, it was simply to see his father and mother, and not to receive the adulation which was ready for him if he had happened to want it.

"Want it?" He wouldn't have it. On one occasion, when he did favour us with a visit, and Mr. Smear made bold to ask him to read us one of his favourite poems, he became quite excited: "My dear Christopher," he said, "you've heard that poem, and indeed every one of the lot, quite

as often as is good for you: I've been looking through the whole set of them lately, and I'm not at all sure but that the entire collection ought to find its way into the fire; for the courtesy with which you have, all of you, borne the infliction of those precious rhymes over and over again, I am really very much obliged to you, but your patience shall be rewarded, and you shan't be troubled with them again, if I can help it." Here was a state of things. Poor Smear looked as if the crisis of an earthquake were at hand, and Mr. Brogg whispered to me that of a surety that "horrid trial had turned his brain." And so it had in one way, at any rate. He was a changed man.

And now, more wonderful than all, our friend, so far from eschewing society, as from his so rarely showing himself among us might have been expected, began, on the contrary, to take every opportunity of going into what I should have been disposed to call the outer world—the world beyond our limits. He joined the crowd—the giddy, frivolous crowd. He got into a club, and who—who—does the reader think proposed him? Heaven and earth! Surprise of surprises! It was no other than his cousin, between whom and himself there had heretofore been nothing but misunderstanding and uncongeniality. Yes, it was H. K. who proposed him, and brought him through; and when I heard of this, I confess that my spirit did fail me, for I felt that all was indeed altered now, and that C. J. was but too certainly gone from among us.

"What," I said, "fraternise with H. K.? Join a club of which he is a member; nay, even in some sort through his instrumentality? Have you not already our own debating club—the 'Mutual'? Or, if you need one of another kind, Grampus would have got you into the 'Hermits.'"

"We have been playing at 'Hermits' too long already," my friend replied. "It won't do. Hermits don't see the world, and I must see it, mix in it, try to get a place in it. Time enough, to be a Hermit when I fail. And as to H. K. whom we have been in the habit of despising as a worldling, it really seems to me that he has, all this time, while we have been patting each other on the back—that he has, I say, been pursuing a very sensible course, and on the whole has the laugh on his side."

I saw now that the time had come for me to say what little I had to say about recent events, and I spoke:

"My dear friend," I said, "you are much changed of late. So much changed, indeed, and so quickly, that I can hardly recognise you or myself as the same people. I know that that horrid trial has been the immediate cause of all this, but I think even before that you were getting unsettled in your opinions. You come less to our Mutual Union than you used, and, when you do come, you are far from taking the place there which I always expected and intended that you should take. You allow yourself to be contra-

dicted by any ordinary member. That Carpow will never let you say anything without requiring a reason for it if you allow him so much liberty. And then the agreeable circle at Poets' Corner, how little you frequent it now, going forth instead among strangers who don't know what you are as we do. Why should you leave a society where you were understood, where you were recognised by every member of it as a great man, and pass your time among unsympathising people, who will never understand or appreciate you as you deserve?"

"Ah, Bradshaw," he said, "I used to think that I was a great man once."

"And so you are," I answered, cagerly, for I didn't like the despondent tone at all. "What do you mean by saying 'you used to think?'"

"I mean that I've found out my mistake."

"Mistake," I repeated. "What are you talking about? Look at the opinion of the world—of the people you're surrounded by. Do they think you a great man, or do they not?"

"Ah," said my friend, sadly, "that is just it. The opinion of my friends. A small circle, a narrow clique. You began just now to speak of the world. I have forgotten the world, or rather have supposed that the world consisted of half a dozen of my personal friends."

"Yes, but what friends? The very pick of society," I answered. "Besides, your whole life has been that of a great man—"

"Without the greatness," interrupted my friend, in a sad tone. "Upon my life and soul," he added, "I almost believe that I have been an impostor. I have gone on as if I really had a claim on the belief of all the world, and have never paused to inquire in what such a claim consisted. It has been a delusion, a horrid and abominable self-delusion, and you, my good friend, have helped to foster it."

"No," I cried, stoutly. "It was no delusion. This—is the delusion which has got possession of you now. Shake it off, sir, shake it off without delay, and be yourself again. Come among us again your own self. Brush up your hair again into its accustomed form; I'm shocked to see it thus flat and dishevelled. Resume your old manner. I declare it's quite altered. Put these vile fancies away, for Heaven's sake, or I shall go mad. As you are now, I should hardly recognise you. You leave me without rudder or compass in the world. Get back with all speed to be the great C. J. Brogg of the good old times, and let us be happy in the good old way."

"I am afraid, my dear Bradshaw," replied this god of my idolatry, after a short pause, "that your words are wasted. I have spent some time just lately in a searching investigation into my way of life, and everything, whether of a bodily or mental nature, connected with it, and the result of that examination, while it has been humiliating, has been altogether final. Why, consider yourself for a moment, what claim have I to greatness?"

"The claim of being great," I replied, doggedly. "And how has that been shown?" was the next question.

"In a thousand ways," I answered. "Look at your power of retort. Look at your conversational ability. Look at your—at the very look of you, then, when your hair was different, who could mistake you for a moment for anything but a—"

"Ah, my dear friend," interposed C. J., mournfully, "you can't make anything of it. If I ever made a good retort, which I begin to doubt, it was pondered over, and led up to, very carefully. In those, and in my conversation generally, I was helped by my poor brother James, who was never tired of trying to draw me out, and lead the way to something in connexion with which he thought that I might find opportunity for display. And I have encouraged him to do so, and even directed him which way to lead the conversation, in order that I might get in my effects."

I was at my wits' end. "This never can be, never must be, never shall be," I cried, in the bitterness of my soul. "If you are going to take ideas of this sort into your head, you will leave me with nobody to believe in, nothing to care about in the world. We were such a happy little circle—"

"Little enough," murmured Brogg, abstractedly.

"So much the better," I went on; "we understood each other. The world is such a vast place, and society is such a vast institution, that people who would fain sound each other's depths, and really know themselves and their fellows, must necessarily go aside out of the crowd, and live to some extent apart. And very happy we were, and now you're going to spoil it all, and we shall all drop asunder and be lost. Our strength is in union, and, the union gone, where shall we be? For my part, I tell you fairly that I shall lapse back into being a mere worldling. I shall go to plays for other purposes than to furnish a criticism to the 'Mutual.' I shall read the newspapers. I shall walk in the Park—go to the dogs altogether, most likely."

"Better go to the dogs along with the rest of your fellow-creatures, than go in the same direction, as we were doing, with a sense that we were better than everybody else, believing so mainly because we never ventured to undergo the test of comparison, and shrunk from a competition in which doubtless we should have broken down."

"You break down! Ha, ha!" I said, savagely. "As likely as not. The great world outside is hard to excel in. A man can sing his song with but a weak piping-note in a boudoir and win a wealth of applause, who, trying his abilities in the concert-hall, would be laughed to scorn, just as the artist paints a picture as our friend Smear does, which, though admired in his own studio, goes for nothing when exhibited along with others in Trafalgar-square. Why, even the really great men who can stand, and have stood,

the test of comparison, will not shut themselves up in a small set with impunity, for if they do, they will surely come to forget what numbers of clever men there are in the world, who can do as well as they, though in a different line. 'Great!'" he added, enthusiastically, "how few attain to being so! A man who would be called great should give to the world what makes it better or happier; should give some impetus to the advance of civilisation; should sacrifice a lifetime, or maybe a life, to the development of a truth. There has been little enough of this sort of thing in our Mutual Union, Bradshaw."

He paused, and I did not speak. I was bewildered, and could not follow my friend. I was considerably dashed, and yet I could not see—or at least own—that he was right. Long adhesion to a cause, ancient prejudice, I know not what, may have kept me blind. I had sat so long at that wonderful table with the green baize upon it, with the model inkstands, and the cleanly blotting-paper, and the prodigious quills, which were never used except by the profile drawer and our poor friend Smear, who took such prolific notes. How long had I been used to that way of spending the evening; how accustomed was my hand to the little ivory hammer with which it was my wont to rap the members into silence when any gentleman was going to enlighten us with a few remarks! What heart should I have now for ivory hammers, or anything else belonging to our revered institution?

This was all the work of that accursed trial. If that stupid Grampus would have allowed his neighbour's dog to bark in peace, things might still have gone on in the old pleasant way. And yet I don't know. Our dear friend had seemed a good deal unsettled lately—self-mistrustful, diffident, hesitating. That speech to the Reverend Smear, recorded at the close of the last chapter but one, was very significant of an unsettled frame of mind: "I am beginning to doubt whether I am the remarkable person you would in your kindness make me out to be." There was a misgiving already existent, and only needing that infernal trial to give it confirmation. That speech of the counsel for the other side, "Sir, we have heard a great deal of what you are *not*, but nothing of what you are," seems to have sunk into C. J.'s very heart of hearts, and made him an altered man. I felt despondent in the last degree.

"Don't be cast down, William," said my well-loved friend, speaking once again with heart in his voice. "This change makes no difference between us, or only the difference that we may not meet quite so often as before. I *must* do as I am doing. It was all very well the other way of life, but it wasn't right. It was very pleasant, I grant you; very soothing, never to hear anything but what was agreeable, but it wasn't wholesome. What a bore I was becoming with all that reading aloud, and holding forth; I remember now how they used to yawn. I must

have had more opportunities of studying the interior of the human mouth than any man not a dentist in England. No, no! It was a mistake for *me*, at any rate. An atmosphere so carefully guarded from chills and draughts as that, was not good for one in such good health as I am. The change, I grant you, is a great one. The men of the clubs, and others who take the principal parts in the Drama of London Life, are not venerative, nor are they easily impressed. You must mind what you are about with them. If you make a mistake, they will promptly be down upon you. The air is rough, cold, bracing; but it is wholesome and strengthening. Let me live in it then, old friend, at any rate as long as my constitution stands it. If I fall into a consumption, or a bronchitis, I will come back to the hothouse to be nursed, but till then I will just go on as well as I can, resolving, at any rate, rather to be a minnow among the Tritons, than a Triton among the minnows."

He ceased, and I saw that all was over, and that it was useless, perhaps wrong, for me to say any more. Maybe he had chosen rightly, for he knew better than I did.

At all events, here my function ceases. What may be the future career of him whose early life I have thus imperfectly sketched, remains to be seen, but I shrewdly suspect that the public will hear of it without need of any chronicling of mine. My task is over. As my friend issues out of the limits of that home circle in which he was so well understood and so highly appreciated, he passes beyond my reach, and I can only look on with a sigh, and feel as if he had embarked upon a long and arduous voyage, and had left me loitering behind.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER IV. THE HOUSE IN ALFRED-PLACE.

IN time, over the interval of two months. In space, from Paris to London. From the Grand Hotel to a bright cozy compact house—one of a clean series in Alfred-place, standing together like a row of Sunday-school children. Neighbours hardly knew who lived there, but the number was down in the note-books, and in the minds of many skilful men; was familiar at the Great Literary Club, and the name of Pauline Manuel lifted many faces from the Times or Globe. Among these was the face of, say, a Herculean humorist who growled pleasantly at a hollow world over claret; the faces of leading witty men, who brought their jokes and quips to dinners, like conjurors bringing their apparatus to a child's party, and who, like the conjurors, would not be received without their apparatus; of leading clergymen, hard thoughtful men, who dug and trenched in the heavy soil of reviews; of younger and more unclerical men, who did the ornamental gardening of magazines; of a placid Italian barytone, gentleman in everything save birth; of a bishop or two; of a doctor or two; of a lawyer or two; of a member of parliament or two. These, with the faces of their wives, were Pauline Manuel's constituency—a miniature world in itself. In that small house in Alfred-place was a small round table that held exactly eight; it was lighted by white Dresden candelabra, and the light fell usually on a witty face, a clerical-reviewing face, a singing, a barristerial, a senatorial, or an editorial face. They were delightful little meals—choice in all points.

How she drifted into such circles, or rather how they came floating and drifting about her, was through the mere general attraction which a bright flashing, dazzling face, a face that people looked long after in the street, always exercises. Lord Puttenham, who had but one standard of beauty, and who always introduced that standard by an unnecessary appeal to his Maker, said she was like Grisi in her best days. To the house in Alfred-place came fossil old noblemen like Lord Puttenham, about as infirm as old furniture; tall, florid, general officers, as fond of the warm rays of beauty as of sitting in the sun; lively wives of

lively men; in short, a delightful miscellany. At Alfred-place were the most delightful of morning calls, where new music was heard, and new painting worked at; of afternoon visits, where tea was drunk, and talk mixed with the tea like cream, and where the little dinner was spread; from Alfred-place went the pleasant party to opera or play, and to Alfred-place came home the pleasant party from opera or play to the little supper on the round table. All liked her. Older acquaintances were eager to know her better; others outside were struggling and canvassing to be admitted. It was noted how eager she was to extend her list. She wished to know everybody. "You only care for new faces," said Fobley of the Guards; "half a dozen in the day—like gloves."

Pauline, who had for many minutes been eagerly searching a gay crowd, flashed him a gay smile. "I do," she said; "I like variety. The man from Covent-garden changes these flowers for me every second day. Mr. Griesbael," she said to that reviewer of Gibbon, Pitt, and other heavy subjects, "being at a window and seeing a procession go by all day long, that is the true notion of life! Don't you think so?"

When a new soldier came home from the Caroo Islands, or a new sailor from the Main, she always said to some of her staff, "Bring him to me." Travellers of any degree she relished, making them sit down beside her. The young soldier would think fatuously of his own charms, the seaman would glow with his pinkest blushes.

"O," she would say, "I have known so many who have gone out *there*. It must be delightful. I envy you all."

"We were up at Yalalabad, you know," the fatuous youth would say. "I and Filmer and old Jekyl. We used to dine with the commissioner, an old Scotchman, with a daughter, and——"

"Did you ever meet with Sir Hopkins Pocock out there?"

"Who? Never heard of him—who's he?"

"O, nothing," said she. "An old friend—I thought you might."

From that instant the youth—and he was but a type of many more who suffered under the same process—found the soft warm water growing suddenly colder, until he had to leap out and fly in confusion. So with an agreeable traveller,

newly returned and writing a book—Six Months with the Queen of Bushra—Bushra was not far, that is to say, less than six hundred miles, from Sir Hopkins's government. O, yes, he had made an excursion as he came home—governor civil enough—wanted him (the traveller) to dine with him, but didn't. Saw nothing—saw nobody—heard nothing, and heard of nobody. Nothing to the Queen of Bushra, who gave him a bracelet of teeth, which she had gathered with her own hands. The water grew icy, cold with startling suddenness.

So with the tourist, the author of the lively journal *From Spa to Spa*. "You meet all sorts of people at those wicked places, Mr. Duncan Davis," she would say, with a smile, "and touch them off so cleverly. I sat up till one last night reading the book you sent me. I have friends that go every year, and can tell me nothing. By the way, did you ever fall in with a Mr. Carter and his family?"

"Carter, Carter!" said Mr. Duncan Davis, searching the old closet he called his memory. "Yes, to be sure, at Nauheim. There was a Carter there."

Pauline's face grew very eager. "You did?" she said. "Tell me about him—you quite interest me."

"To be sure," said Duncan Davis. "I knew him intimately. He was the chaplain, and had the English chapel, and——"

But some one had turned the cruel cock, and the water again grew icy cold. Duncan Davis never told more of the Nauheim chaplain.

This had been Pauline's life, and Pauline's curious purpose of general inquiry had been noted by a few gentlemen as a phase of fascinating oddity. The wives of the gentlemen—strongly intellectual in their way, and whose voices rang out at dinner sharp and clear as their lords'—were pleasant on this fancy, and hinted at the supposed matrimonial end of all society.

"With so large a net, my dear," said Mrs. Winslow Jones, "she will have a salmon one of these mornings." This drawing in of her net was delightful to all assistants, for the fisherwoman's voice was so gay and so fascinating. Her talk was a sort of moderated burlesque—a softened comic exaggeration—a dressing up of light flying topics in quaint, sober, solemn language. Then her deep limpid eye flashed, the bells began to ring, and the music to play, and the voices of gay laughing revellers were heard in her throat, as though a door had been opened quickly. But when the lights were down, and the social theatre closed for the night, the deep limpid eyes grew dull, the clouds began to gather, and an old look of weary restlessness, which seemed the reflection, as in a glass, of a heavier and a yet wearier restlessness, now more than two years old, came and settled on her face. These two looks were familiar and habitual with Pauline, during this year or two. The first the world saw: the second, only that gloomy brother, now grown yet more gloomy.

In a mean street—that hung like a torn bit of ribbon from the skirt of Belgrave-square—and in a rather mean house (but which was let, as birds'-nests are sold in China, for its weight in silver), Lady Laura Fernor and her band had thrown up fresh works. Flushed with recent success, she had seen the truth that all things naturally tend to the centre and to the metropolis; and she was now operating from a sort of "pal" in town.

At pleasant chambers in St. James's-square, the special morning paper whose function it is to calculate the right ascension of the fashionable heavenly bodies, had announced that Sir Hopkins Pocock had recently arrived. The Eastern dependency had not been so skillfully manipulated as the Waipiti. With those intractable savages he had won glory; more civilised beings he had found less impressionable. He was recalled. His staff and dependents fell with him: and Sir Hopkins Pocock, C.B., returned to England, his health having broken down sadly, as we all well knew.

In Clarges-street, idlers, and neighbours who were idlers, had noticed men, like shipwrights on a ship's side, busy burnishing and scouring a model house from top to bottom; and at whose door a little later, great wains were seen disgorging furniture from their dark jaws, like whales on wheels. The more curious still, four days later, that there was a tall, grim, stiff gentleman, whose name was Carlay, in possession, and who was expecting home his married daughter and her husband, who were to live with him.

These are the little strands which are to make the piece. The weaving may now begin.

CHAPTER V. A VISIT.

DURING these days there was often sitting in Pauline's drawing-room, and almost at Pauline's feet, the chair was so very low, the gauntly handsome Mr. Romaine who was of her party at the French play. He was one of the travellers whom she had sent for, and who had been contemptuously turned away with the rest, when it was found that there was no profit in him; but he had declined to accept that furlough. It suited him to stay. His cheeks were well scorched, even to a hard red; his cheek-bones were high and glossy; there was much of his neck seen; he had shiny eyes in deep ambushade, and a glossy overhanging moustache. Yet he was tall, manly, gaunt, *alive*, and, when he chose, soft as a woman. He was one of those men who put up a dozen guns for luggage, and go and range among the poor wild beasts, who no doubt wonder what manner of wild beasts these are that come to their forests to scatter fire and smoke, and the sharp report, and the smashing stroke, and the cruel agony. He had gone among odd tribes—blacks and greys, and red-coloured—and received the freedom of their wigwags, and had been offered wives in profusion, and had written very agreeable narratives of his adven-

ture of Ulalumai; or, the Tawney River. The Great Circulator took five hundred copies.

He was not married, and never would marry; but liked to scoff and gird at women with politeness; sitting at their feet (on these low chairs) telling, too, of his rough sports—a sort of Othello in outline. To hear these matters *they* did seriously incline. There had been a lady whom he called Virginia Grammont, whom he loved to entertain in this fashion, on whose low chair he sat, whom he taught, scolded, carped at, complimented, sneered at, but regarded in some sort as his own special property. That hour of ten every second day, he took her as regularly as he would his cigar, or dinner. She was a sort of book, more a pamphlet he would have said, for him. He *required* her.

She of course was of the gay young condottieri, who scour the ball-rooms. Here making war for “an idea” does not obtain, and *could* not obtain. For, speaking metaphorically, how are horses and forage, and caparisons and accoutrements, and subsistence, to be found on such terms? Suddenly one day she became a Mrs. Massinger. Mr. Romaine was thrust with a shock from the low chair.

He was in a fury. He raged as if some personal injury had been done to him. He would have liked to have gone out with a rifle and shot Massinger like a panther. But Mr. and Mrs. Massinger were away, going to spend the winter at Rome. He now discovered that he loved this girl. The gaunt face glowed with colour, the man, who had seen savage women until he had began to think the whole sex pure cattle, was in sore distress.

He had begun to know Pauline about this time. She laughed openly at his troubles; fanciful, she called them. He did not much care how she received them; all he wanted was some one to make company while he talked, and sometimes “honed” himself, and more often sprang from the low chair, and tramped heavily up and down with long strides on her carpet. She bore with him patiently, and often without speaking, sometimes throwing on fuel, as it were a log of wood, quietly.

“This is all your own pride, which has been touched,” she would say. On this he would stop his striding, pulling himself up, as if he were a strong horse, and would begin champing his bit impatiently, and pawing the carpet, fixing on her a strange half fierce look from his bright eyes. Then he launched into harangues, half invective and half expostulation. This was one pattern of many such scenes. It fell in with his daily life, and about every second or third afternoon a huge rough poncho of his was lying on the hall table, and the heavy hollow beat of his stride was heard on the floor overhead.

The house in Alfred-place had a balcony, which was a perfect garden. From the top of the street was seen what looked like a flower-bed in the air—luxuriant greenery, hanging and clustering, with large bright patch of rich red, so that

strangers and passers-by often turned down the street to get a nearer view. A yet brighter patch of colour attracted them when the face of the mistress was seen bent down over her flowers. Not that she fancied gardening, but as she once said in her odd way to Lord Puttenham, who had protested that his gardener should send up a box of rare cuttings and roots from Puttenham: “She liked flowers, because they were *sure* to die.”

Thus was she, one evening about four o’clock, bent down over the balcony, pulling away a living leaf as often as a dead one. The little street was deserted, never at any time having much traffic. Two figures had walked past the top—two girls as they seemed—who were caught by the bright flash in the balcony, the gorgeous reds—and came down slowly to see better. As they came under, they looked up with women’s delight in flowers, and Miss Manuel, who did not care to look at any faces, could not help seeing the upturned ones through the green leaves.

In a second she had flown back into her room, and rang the bell. “Ask that lady to come in,” she said to her servant. “Bring her in; and, if she refuses, call to me.” The servant bowed, and Pauline, shooting a glance round her room, said aloud, “Ah! they are come at last, and it is full time to begin.”

It was a lady and her maid that were admiring the flowers. The servant did his office so gravely, discreetly, and impressively, that the lady hovered timorously on the steps. There was a mesmeric influence of cold respect about his sad sphinx eyes which seemed to draw the young Mrs. Fermor inside the open door.

“I am afraid,” she said, “that is—really I don’t know the lady—”

“She is waiting, ma’am, for you in the drawing-room,” said the menial of the stony eyes; and then there came a melodious voice from the stairs, and the figure of Pauline glided towards her. She brought her in, and the cold-eyed closed the door as though he had been a jailer. From this afternoon it all began.

Young Mrs. Fermor hardly recovered; and, still timorous, made as though she would go away again. “You remember that night at the play?” said Pauline, leading her into the drawing-room, as though it had been a strong-room. “Of course you forget my face. I do not forget yours. The moment I saw you in the box I had a sort of instinct who it was. You must know me. And I want you to like me.”

The young girl recollected that theatre very well, and when she was looking up admiring the flowers, also recollected the face she had seen through the leaves. She was of a calm temper; soft and gentle as she was, and not likely to be hurried into speechless confusion as hapless Violet would have been. She looked at Pauline for a moment, and said:

“After a time I shall try. I have only seen you once, recollect, and that for a moment.”

Pauline smiled. "You have seen more of the world than I have. I wish I had that wise caution. Sit down, won't you, and let us talk? Or first, let me apologise," added Pauline, dropping her eyes humbly, "for thus violently carrying you into the house. You have a hundred things to do, I am sure. And now that I have seen you and spoken to you—"

A hundred feelings were working in Mrs. Fermor's mind. She recollected the night at the Grand Hotel, and she had accepted her husband's forgetfulness of the lady as though it were truth; but this had not passed out of her mind. It had only been packed up carefully and put by. That little compliment about knowing the world better than the grand, flashing creature before her, had some little sweetness—there was curiosity to know more, to discover more; and so she did not rise to go away.

"We *ought* to know each other well," said Pauline, after a pause; "after all that has happened. It is so curious, our sitting this way together, we two—of all people in the world. There are some—pray forgive me—who could not bear to look at you."

Young Mrs. Fermor smiled. She was thinking that winners should be gracious always, and could afford to hear much.

"I don't know what to say," she said; "these things *will* come about."

"Of course," said the other; "of course. Well, you are tired of our story and our woes. He has told you of it over and over again—every minute detail—until you are sick of the whole business. He has described everything to you over and over again."

The girl coloured. "No, indeed," she said; "I had no curiosity. I never asked him."

"Never told you!" said Pauline. "I should have thought it had been the one subject of his mind. It should have been burnt into his brain. I should fancy its haunting him like a nightmare. *You* would fancy so, too! Naturally so, only that the subject would not be so welcome to a young wife. You have fitted up your skeleton-closet already, my dear child. No matter. It does as well as other furniture. You are very happy, of course—while that poor darling—you will say at least here, my sister's, was a very cruel fate."

"Why," said young Mrs. Fermor, "is *she* not happy?"

Pauline looked at her. "Why do you take the trouble of acting with me?"

"I protest," said the other, warmly, "I know nothing—and have heard nothing. Was not her marriage happy?"

Pauline started, gave a half cry. "Marriage! What marriage? Ah, she *was* to have been married. Ah! now I see. They have not told you anything. He thought it was better not, as it was only one of the old pathetic romantic stories."

Mrs. Fermor was troubled; she looked wondering and timorous at Pauline.

"She died," the latter went on—speaking fast, "poor sweet child; foolishly, I think. Some would have lived on through everything; *she* was only a child, and the idea of being deserted wore her out of life."

"Deserted!" said the other, starting up. "No. Why, I was told—"

"O, of course," said Pauline, her cheeks glowing; "these were too ugly ideas to be introduced to a young bride! Ah! and yet it was a cruel, cruel story."

Young Mrs. Fermor, greatly shocked, could only say, "I never heard, indeed I did not. O, this is dreadful; poor, poor child. I am so grieved."

Pauline looked at her half scornfully.

"That should be all over now, and time should have healed—what's the phrase? Yes, Mrs. Fermor, death had to be called in to make a place for *you*. In some of the long nights, get Captain Fermor to tell you all the details. By-and-by, you will discover other secrets which he has not yet told you. But all in good time."

Young Mrs. Fermor was all confused, almost overwhelmed by this news, and looked at her helplessly. Just then the door opened sharply, and a heavy figure swung in. It was the Mr. Romaine, who was so handsomely gaunt.

CHAPTER VI. MR. ROMAINE.

His tread became heavy, as he saw there was some one else present. He flung himself with open ill humour on to a seat, casting a look of impatience at the lady in shawl and bount, who was so perversely in the way.

"This is Mrs. Fermor; don't you remember, Mr. Romaine? You were introduced before; for shame! You should send and have your memory cleaned and oiled."

Romaine looked at her angrily; pushed the low chair back.

"I want to recollect as little as I can, as you know," he said, bluntly; "I am sick of remembering. I wish the whole machine was worn out."

"You have been in France—" said Pauline. "Yet no Frenchman would have made such a speech."

"Frenchman!" he said, with contempt. "I mean no offence to your visitor, and if any one is offended, I am sure I am ready to apologise. But I say still, thank God I am not a Frenchman. Better the lowest English boor before that!"

He thus artfully escaped a special acquaintance with the visitor, keeping her under the general category of "a lady." Young Mrs. Fermor—not yet recovered from the strange things she had been hearing; and this wonder mixed itself with yet another wonder at this strange person, also with a little pique at his rudeness—said, softly, "I am not the least offended. I must say a word, though, for our low English boors; I have always found *them* polite."

She said this very naturally, and perhaps

meant nothing special, after all. Pauline smiled. Romaine looked at Mrs. Fernor fixedly for a moment.

"Out of the mouths of babes, *you* know," said Pauline; "rather it is not likely you *should* know. Take care."

He said nothing, but got up and began to pace. "I hear, after all," he said, "they will not go to Rome. That fellow has listened to reason at last."

"To the doctors?" said Pauline.

"To *reason*, I said!" he replied, stopping suddenly before them, laughing grimly. "Poor Virginia's chest is made of gauze; a Roman winter for *her*—God help her, when it all begins so wisely as *that*, how will it go on?"

"O, very well," said Pauline, calmly; "he will make a very good serviceable creature; kind and thoughtful, better than a hundred of your showy theatrical men, who wish marriage to be *all* husband."

Young Mrs. Fernor sighed deeply, and even loudly. Pauline's eyes floated round significantly to Mr. Romaine's eyes. That sigh saved ten minutes' explanation afterwards. Then Mrs. Fernor rose to go. She bowed with a timidity not unacceptable to him, who returned it with a gracious ungraciousness. Pauline went out with her.

"You must excuse him," she said; "he is in an odd state at present, and we have all to humour him. A girl he liked has just married, and he is suffering, poor soul. Shall we see each other soon? I want you to love me. I do indeed. I live in the solitude of the world. I have no one to care for me since my poor darling was taken from me. You *know* it was hard, since she was not to go with him, that she could not have stayed with us. Won't you love me?"

Mrs. Fernor saw her eyes glistening. She was conqueror, and could be generous. Pressing her hand, she said, "Indeed I will."

Coming back to her drawing-room, Pauline found the steady pacing going on.

"You seem to have a good deal to say at the door there," he said. "Is the lobby to become the drawing-room?"

Pauline laughed. "How intolerant!" she said; "intolerant even of a simple girl like that."

"Simple, indeed," he said, still pacing. "Who is she, pray?"

"I should tell you nothing," said Pauline; "you had a field for yourself, and one of these Frenchmen you despise so, would have shone. However, you confounded her, I think—I suppose she had not seen so wild a being in her life."

"Folly," he said, roughly. "Simple enough, though. Who is she?"

"A married girl. This is her third moon."

"I remember the husband now—a stick, and a conceited stick. A stick I should like to break across my knee."

"She is a half school-girl," said Pauline, "full of wonder and admiration for anything won-

derful or admirable. One of the true worshipping souls—the rarest kind of this sort of virtue."

He stopped pacing. "I have given up collecting," he said.

"The marriage, I suspect," continued Pauline, opening and shutting a fan, "will not be the happiest. He is fine and vain. He is de par amours, as the old French romancers say; his head is turned with conquest. There was a poor girl—No matter."

There was scorn in Mr. Romaine's face. He was intolerant. "I knew he was a stick," he said. "I took his measure for a prig at the first glance."

"There," said Pauline, laughing, "make her one of your vestals. She is actually made to worship. Don't you see devotion in her eye, poor soft child? There are many weary moments in the day, you know, hard to fill up."

Thus Miss Manuel and Mr. Romaine talked until the lamp was brought in. Then the Bishop of Leighton Buzzard came in, bringing with him those finely-turned ebony legs; and, after the bishop, the pleasant reviewer; and, after him, the general company. A crowd of faces—many false, many indifferent; but, by-and-by, appeared among them one *true* one—that of Young Brett.

An officer-child or an officer-boy in that company would have been wholly irrelevant. He would have fallen upon evil days, and have been stoned—that is to say, politely jeered out of the place. But Pauline honoured and even loved that faithful young soldier.

"No one must touch my terrier," she said.

For him there was a happy smile. She was glad when she saw his figure. His ready service—his faithful devotion in old cruel days, now happily far off, were not to be forgotten. Indeed, his true and simple devotion had been made manifest in a hundred kind and useful ways; and, so long as he had stayed at Eastport, he had watched tenderly over that quiet marble slab which rested over poor Violet. When the regiment moved, which it did in about a year, Pauline, returning home, discovered that he had privately salaried an assistant in a nursery-garden to look after weeds, and do such little gardening as would be wanting.

But, in that mixed company, his own merits soon exempted him from any protection. This day he came and was welcomed by Pauline, who had not seen him for a fortnight. He sat down beside her. "Do you remember your wondering," he said, "what had become of that man at Eastport—that Major Carter?"

Pauline's eyes flashed.

"Yes—yes," she said hastily; "what have you heard?"

"I saw him to-day," said Young Brett. "I never liked him. But I went up and spoke to him. I found out all about him."

"Yes?" said Pauline, with great interest; "go on. You are the most useful friend I have."

"Nonsense, Miss Manuel," said he, colouring under this praise; "you will spoil me. He has been abroad. Some little town in France. He is in mourning, and has lost his wife; in great grief, I suppose."

"And is he going back to France?" said Pauline, eagerly.

"Dear no!" he said; "has just taken a house; he told me his address; asked about you."

"He *did*," said Pauline, with compressed lips.

"O yes," said Young Brett; "and soon after we parted at the corner of Pall-Mall: I was going to the club, and he went to the Irrefragable Insurance Company."

"Insurance company?" said Pauline; "why, what for?"

"I don't know," said Young Brett, in a little distress at not having made this out; "but I could ask, you know—find out—"

"No, no," said Pauline; "it is nothing. Thanks. You are always good to me, and useful. Now, hand the bishop his tea."

And to the bishop, whose turned ebony limbs lay over each other like two miniature gymnastic clubs reposing in a corner, he hurried over, eagerly bearing a cup of tea.

HIS SABLE MAJESTY'S CUSTOMS.

THREE or four years ago that seasoned traveller in strange lands, African and Asiatic, Captain Richard F. Burton, offered to revisit Abomey, or, as he spells it, Agbome, the capital of Dahomey, or, as he spells it, Dahome. About two years ago Commodore Wilmot, R.N., in command of her Majesty's naval forces on the African coast, with Captain Luce and Dr. Haran, did pay a visit to Abomey, and were well received at the negro court of the slave coast, infamous for the human sacrifices at its bloody "customs." Friendly understanding of some sort was then established; the necessity of finding for Dahomey some lawful source of industry and wealth to replace the slave trade was discussed with King Geleke; the king offered to encourage any settlement of English traders at Whydah, and expected to be visited again, and to receive divers presents from the English government, including a carriage and horses that he had particularly asked for. Commodore Wilmot did not repeat his visit, but the British government, half a year later, commissioned Captain Burton (who desired the expedition, and as consul at Fernando Po was living within five hundred miles of the King of Dahomey's port of Whydah) to go and do what he could. If any civilised ideas had fallen as good seed upon very thin soil at the court of Abomey, he might encourage their growth; chiefly he was to aid in the discouragement of the slave-trade, and do anything that it might be possible to do in mitigation of the barbarous "customs." He was supplied with presents from England for the King of Dahomey—a silk damask tent and pole,

a coat of mail and gauntlets, two embossed silver belts, a silver embossed pipe, two silver-gilt waiters, and other articles precious to savage eyes.

It was a year ago, on the twenty-ninth of November, last year, that Captain Burton left Fernando Po upon this mission, which gave him the three months in Dahomey, whereof he has since told the story in the amusing book from which we describe his experiences. Anchoring off Whydah on the fifth of December, her Majesty's Commissioner to Dahomey landed ceremoniously amid song and shout, to be met on the shore by the Reverend Peter W. Bernasko, native teacher and principal of the Wesleyan Mission at Whydah, and by an escort of twenty men, who led the way from the shore to the town, shouting, firing, singing, and dancing, and stopping to exchange West African courtesies with every "captain" of a village by the way. A kruman marched in front of the landing party, carrying the white and red crossed flag of St. George, followed by five hammocks, with an interpreter and six armed krumen from the ships, brilliant in barges, red nightcaps, and gay pocket-handkerchiefs. By the lagoon and custom-house the march inward to the town of Whydah is over a couple of miles of the swamps and sandy hillocks of the false coast, by a road which the slave-dealers keep bad for better discouragement of intruders. In Whydah, after the ceremonies of entrance, the new comers dismounted at the English fort, and refreshed themselves, as well as the crowd of visitors, the musket firing, and return cannonading, would permit, in the trelliced abour that forms the centre of each European enclosure. Next day there were more ceremonies, with exchange of gifts.

In Whydah, the head-quarters of the demoralising slave-trade, where almost every man is a rascal, crimes of violence are rare. The town is a group of villages divided into five quarters, each under its own cabboceer, and with a viceroy over all. Its streets, which are mere continuations of the bush-paths lined by the outwardly ruinous walls of the compounds and the windowless backs of the houses, are very quiet at nights, and in charge of constables, who squat in pairs, and rise suddenly to flash their torches in the face of any wayfarer. If he be a stranger who has lost his way, they courteously conduct him to his quarters. At times, the chief of the police goes round and lays his stick upon the backs of all his subordinates who are caught napping.

Whydah is a paradise for the pre-Raphaelite colonist. It has a milky blue sky, verdigris-green grass, and a bright-red clay soil. It stands about a mile and a half in direct line from the sea, parted from it by a broad leek-green swamp, a narrow lagoon, and a high sand-bank tufted with palms and palmyras of a deep green approaching to black, over which only the masts of shipping are to be seen shooting up above the houses. The town is about two miles and a half long by a mile broad, picturesque when

seen from without, but within squalid and decaying. Except round the chief market-place, the houses, with walls not more than seven or eight feet high, built of the red clay, are scattered; sometimes an enclosure of acres belongs to a single property, and there is altogether far more bush than building. Fires are common, and after a great fire almost every house is girt with a fetich charm of dead leaves hanging at wide intervals from a country rope. Before the gates also of many a house is set up a scarecrow, the Vo-sisa, to drive away the evil spirits, who are supposed to mistake for a terrible man a pole with an empty calabash on it to imitate a head and a body of grass thatch, palm-leaves, fowls' feathers, and shells. Near almost every door stands also the Legba-pot, or Devil's Dish, supplied daily with food, eaten by the vulture or turkey-bustard, the Dahomey scavenger, whose life is sacred, and who presumes much on the fact. There used to be in the environs fine cultivated farms, now there are none, but only marshes, palm-orchards, and neglected clumps of wood. The population of the town, which has decayed with the fortunes of the slave-trade, is also diminishing. It has been estimated by the French mission to be no more than twelve thousand, and even this number is reduced by one-half in time of war.

There are in Whydah four European forts, or factories; in order of seniority, French, Brazilian, English, and Portuguese; there used to be a Dutch and a Prussian factory, but they have long since disappeared. The English fort is now tenanted by the Wesleyan mission, established rather more than twenty years ago, by Mr T. B. Freeman and his companion, Mr Dawson. Ten years ago they were followed by the Reverend Mr. Bernasko, the present principal, and sole minister of the fort, where he has a complement of a dozen coloured men and a school of nearly fifty pupils. Mr. Bernasko, with small pay and many living at his charge, is obliged to feed his mission from the produce of a store for the sale of cloth and pottery, rum and ammunition, within a few yards of his chapel.

The native religion sets up horrible clay images of Legbo, and has, in a little round hut of mud, whitewashed inside and out, with an extinguisher-shaped thatch for its roof, an establishment of sacred snakes, of a kind some ten feet long, and not poisonous. On the other side of the road their devotees sit upon tree-roots, and watch over them. Here also are fetich schools, where any child touched by the snake must be taken for a year from its parents, and, at their expense, taught the songs and dances proper to snake-worship. To kill a snake of the sacred sort in Dahomey, even by accident, used to be death to the killer; now he is put into a hole under a hut of dry fagots, thatched with grass that has been well greased with palm-oil. Fire is set to the hut, and through the fire he must rush up to make his way to the nearest running water, followed by the serpent priests, who beat him mercilessly

with sticks and pelt him with clods. Thus he suffers by fire and water, besides running the gauntlet.

Many have died under this ordeal, but the founder in Whydah of the De Souza family saved many a victim, by stationing a number of his slaves round him, with orders to give him, as he ran, only the semblance of a beating, while they stood in the way of the sticks of the merciless. Serpent-worship is a religion of the coast. When the Dahomans conquered Whydah, they did so in defiance of the fetich power of a sacred snake that had been left to defend alone the passage of a marsh that could have been held well enough by a few fighting men. Yet libelously to persist in their snake-worship almost reconciled the Whydahs to the stern Dahoman rule.

The De Souza just mentioned was a peasant, who left Rio Janeiro more than half a century ago, to see the world. He became in Whydah governor of the Portuguese fort, and about the year 'forty-three was raised to the native dignity of *chaca*, or principal agent for commerce, between the king and all strangers. As this captain of the merchants could admit or exclude what articles he chose, and had the regulation of the excise, his power of enriching himself was considerable, and he used it without scruple. But, as we have seen, though a publican and a slave-trader, he was of kindly temper, discouraging torture, and steadily refused to be present at any human sacrifice. When advanced in life, he had the Prince de Joinville for a guest, and he died in the year 'forty-nine, leaving a hundred children to contest the succession to his dignity of *chaca*. The family is still numerous, quarrelsome, and influential in Dahomey.

When Captain Burton was on the point of advancing to the capital, there arrived at Whydah, with credentials in the form of a "shark-stick" and a "lion-stick" (tomahawks with shark and lion ornaments), two of the King of Dahomey's eunuchs, with names signifying Here-brave-here and Cannot-get-such-a-son-to-be-born. The arrival of these messengers with their retinue enforced three days' delay for a palaver, but on the thirteenth of December the start was made. Captain Burton went in company with Mr. Bernasko and his son Toni, a small boy of eleven, who already spoke half a dozen of the coast dialects. Other personages of the procession were Toni's *kia*, or confidential negro, an amusing imp aged ten, who did not look more than half that age; two interpreters; various catechumens, and the six slave boys whom the King of Dahomey allowed Mr. Bernasko to convert at Whydah; a coloured taylor and barber, who called himself the ensign, and carried the flag of St. George; a spy; a Popo rascal; a cook; and the usual tail of hungry followers. One of the interpreters was John Mark, son of Mark Lemon, whom Commander Forbes describes as a "perfect Dahoman, too big a fool to be a rogue," and the great-grandson of an English corporal. The other was Mr. Beecham,

a slave given to the Wesleyan Mission, and sent for education to Cape Coast Castle, where he had introduced himself as "Prince Bah." For an offence in Dahomey he had suffered three days' imprisonment, and was cowed for life by the horror of the heavy chains, the handful of grain, the cup of dirty water once a day, and the nights on the hard floor, where he was bitten by the iwe worm, which, in dread of a terrible bastinado, he did not dare to kill: "He used to weep with fear if ordered to go anywhere, or to say anything, from which his vivid fancy could distil danger, and nothing but the strongest drink, constantly adhibited, carried him through his trials."

So the procession set out through the misty morning air, the six hammocks, including those of the interpreters and of the sharp boy Tom, being preceded by a youth bearing the king's cane and a hide-whip wherewith to clear the way by driving all the carriers into the bush. The traveller's hammock in Dahomey is supported rather on the heads than on the shoulders of the short-necked negroes. An old traveller complained of being "trussed in a bag and tossed on negroes' heads;" but the chief objection is to the brittleness of a pegged bamboo, which is part of the structure; because, when that gives way as it often does, the traveller is suddenly shot head first to the ground. Comes down, in hunting phrase, "a cropper;" or, in the language of the lecturer, gets a bad fall on his occiput.

The way is, by maize-fields and a scattered line of the lofty bombax (related to the baobab of Senegal) and umbrella trees backing the town, over a fair open rolling plain, where the tall guinea-grass is being burnt down before the dry season sowing, and the bright leek-green of the growing herbage stands out gaudily from the black charred stems and the red loam of the ground. The road is ten or twelve feet wide, sandy, well cleared, and thronged with carriers in Indian file, mostly women, bearing huge loads lashed to their baskets. The women in Dahomey are rather of stronger build and larger size than the men, and, as everybody knows, take their part in the service of their king and country, not only as labourers but also as soldiers. Yet, oddly enough, in that character they say they have become men, and themselves stigmatise a coward as a woman.

The monotony of the plain country is relieved by clumps and groves of palm-trees, stunted where they grow singly, but in the bush rising to a great height in search of air and sun. Or the cocoa and the oil-palm are found scattered like trees in an English orchard, the oil-palms being numbered with a view to revenue. The line of the Agbana water, a foul swamp, is marked by a jungle strip, two hundred yards broad, of bombax and broad-leaved figs. Here the smell of the hardly eatable wild mango mingles with many a baser savour. Over the marsh runs the road, and up another wave of ground, with a little village on the summit half-buried in the plantain-bush, down into a copse where water runs during the

rains; up again to level ground, and the grove thatches and mat huts of Savi among small plantations of maize and cassava, with mangoes, plantains, a few cocoa-nuts, oranges, the African apple growing almost wild, and orchards of well-trimmed oil-palms. At Savi there is a halt for the cabboceer's greetings of drumming, dancing, and taboring, drinking of water, and stronger followings, and gifts of food.

Savi once was the capital of Whydah, and had a king able to reward Captain Challenger Ogle with a half-hundred-weight of gold dust for taking and hanging the pirate Roberts in his ship the Royal Fortune.

From Savi towards Ardra, which Captain Burton writes Allada, there is descent again, and in the hollow is the Nyinsin Swamp, which flows, after rains, out of, and again into, the Whydah lagoon. December not being the rainy season, Captain Burton found this swamp a hundred and fifty feet broad, and waist deep with water dark as coffee-grounds, stagnant, over mud into which the porters sank to mid-calf. A road of tree-trunks helped the men over the deepest part. On the banks of the swamp grew ferns and shrubs. This is the swamp that the Whydah people neglected to defend otherwise than by setting up a fetish snake on their side of it when, in seventeen 'twenty-seven, Savi and Whydah were invaded and made part of the kingdom of Dahomey.

On the other side of the swamp the country rises again, and the next wooded descent in the series of undulations is to the Poli Water, beyond which there is a regular ascent of steps to Poli, which is mainly a large market, and stands at the head of the plateau, with a fine view of the fall of land to the south. Here there was lodging for the night, and merry-making, dancing, gin-drinking, drumming, firing of powder.

At sunrise next morning the journey onward was continued down a beautiful narrow path between foliage of tree and fence to the little market-place of Azohwe. Thence, after breakfasting, the way was through a lane of shrubbery with the brightest flowers, red and blue, pink and yellow, with here and there a queenly white lily, to long flats and well-wooded ascents that led to a large grass clearing, patched here and there with palms, bark, and forest; so into Ardra, or Allada, through the maize plantations, and by the detached houses of the suburb to the great square, a copy in small of the great square of Abomey, with a double-storied palace of red clay, having five shuttered windows over the royal gateway. In compliment to this royal abode the procession was carried with much noise thrice round the square.

The tradition of Allada accounts for the name and origin of the kingdom of Dahomey. Nearly two hundred and fifty years ago an old king of Allada died and left three sons. The eldest reigned in his father's place. The second son went away, and founded Hwebonu, since known by us as Little Ardra and Porto Novo. But Dako, the youngest brother, went north and settled at

a place between Kana and Abomey, with permission of the local chief. There Dako became powerful, and encroached on the grounds of a neighbouring chief named Dauh or Da, the snake or rainbow. He exacted from his weaker neighbour more and more of his land, till at last Da cried, "Soon thou wilt build in my belly." And in good time Dako really killed the king, and built over his body the old palace, which he called "Da-homey," "the House in Da's belly;" he meaning the belly in the Ffon tongue, and he me "in the belly." Hereupon the Ffons changed their name to Dahomans, and it was thus, they say, that about the year sixteen hundred and twenty-five, the kingdom of Dahomey came into existence.

"Ardra, or Allada," says Captain Burton, "is the Tours, or Sienna of Dahomey, where the purest Ffon is spoken." At Abomey the aspirates and gutturals are exaggerated, the effect; perhaps, of a colder climate and a more rugged land. Whydah, on the contrary, unduly softens the articulation; as in Egypt, this may be attributed to the damp heat, and consequent languor of the seaboard. At the port town the language is a debased European jargon.

From Ardra, on the sixteenth of December, the party journeyed on to Agrime, seeing finer maize crops than are grown nearer the sea, on a cleared and open highway, through grass, bush, and jungle. Two warriors only appeared as dancers of welcome at the very little market and village entitled Henvi of the Hand-clapping, because there the conqueror of Whydah, when on his way clapped his hands in token of grief, and marched on, refusing to delay his expedition for his mother's funeral. A mile further on is Henvi, or Hawce, with its tattered palace, and its fetish house. At the gateway of the royal house the Dahomey Amazons were first seen, four of them joining in the usual congratulatory dance. An hour's journey further led to Whegbo, where there was more dancing of welcome under fig and fetish trees, and cutting off imaginary heads in the course of the dance, with a boast that next month the valiant dancers would cut off real heads in Abbeokuta. Two hours' march from Whegbo, is Akpwe, at the southern end of the Great Swamp. Here there were tumble-down remains of a royal palace, the poorest of markets, and a thin population, showing a dozen women and children to each man. This in Dahomey is the common condition of the population near the capital.

The Great Swamp, which Captain Burton names the Agrime Swamp, was once the northern boundary between the old kingdom of Allada and the original Dahomey. From December to June it may be crossed in two or three hours; between July and November, visitors to the king have spent two days of continuous toil with ten hammock men up to their armpits in water, and up to their calves in mire, perpetually tripping over the network of tree-roots, that catch their feet. Captain Burton found the swamp unusually dry, and the only fetor in the bush was that of the large black ant, "which sug-

gests that a corpse is hidden behind every tree."

The road was now crowded with porters hastening up to the "Customs." At Wondonun, the half-way house, there was the usual dancing to be endured; another hour's march brought the party to the thatched village of Aiveji, almost buried in dense verdure, where there was again drinking and flancing. Hence they pushed into Agrime, where strangers, when the king is in country quarters at Kana, halt and send forward their message canes, requesting permission to advance. The whole district thus traversed shows that the land was at no distant period well cleared, but that it has been running to ruin since the Dahomans were demoralised by slave-hunts, and long predatory wars.

The land is said to be still easy to reclaim, though in time the fallows will be again afforested. The country has a ruined aspect, scanty of population, and luxuriantly wild. The subjects of Dahomey are not allowed to cultivate around Whydah coffee or sugar-cane, rice or tobacco. They are everywhere forbidden to grow ground-nuts, except for domestic purposes. A cabboceer, or local chief, may not alter his house, wear European shoes, employ a spittoon-holder, carry an umbrella without leave, spread on his bed a counterpane, mount a hammock, or use a chair in his own house. The common public of Abomey may not whitewash the inside of their houses, or close them with wooden doors. Dahomey is eaten up with ceremonial. Our gold sticks in waiting ought to be apprenticed to the negro king, for no imperial or royal court in Europe can compete with the court of Dahomey in abundance and punctiliousness of ceremony. The negroes, Captain Burton thinks, have little to do but amuse themselves with inventing and observing ceremonies, and it is for that reason they do little else. The ceremonies of the royal messenger to the European visitors halting at Agrime preceded the march to Kana, where his Dahoman majesty was to be seen. Kana, an unwall'd scatter of huts and houses, thickening, as usual, around the palace and market-place, and straggling over some three miles of space, lies upon pleasant ground, that suggested to our traveller "a vast pleasure-ground, not unlike some part of the Great Park at Windsor," on the other side of a deep valley stretching east and west. Kana was entered by bright moonlight, between crowds of spectators (from a thin population of about four thousand), occupying all the open places.

Captain Burton details at great length the ceremonies of reception, but even the rich colouring of tropical barbarism cannot make a detail of mere ceremonial otherwise than tedious. An old card-table, stripped of its green baize and of much of its veneer, was paraded in procession with the royal gin and wine; companies and great dignitaries marched past; soldiers danced and fired; eight skulls were paraded upon wooden platters carried on the top of very tall poles; musical warriors, dressed in rich silks,

formed line opposite her Britannic Majesty's commissioner, and sang:

Burton (pronounced Batunu) he hath seen all the world with its kings and cabboceers:
He now cometh to see Dahomey, and he shall see everything here.

In the king's presence, where he sits in the deep shade of a sort of barn-gate, there is a circle of white sand for those who approach to rub their faces in. His Majesty King Gelele, son of King Gezo, by a northern slave girl or a mulatto from the French factory at Whydah, is over six feet tall, well made, except the cucumber-shaped shin, and several shades lighter than his courtiers. He is about forty-five years old, slightly bald, with peppercorn hair generally close shaven, scanty eyebrows, thin beard, thinner moustaches, a square jaw, red beared eyes, and a turned-up nose, "looking, in fact, as if all the lines had been turned the wrong way," but not much flattened, and not wholly without a bridge. He is strongly pock-marked, and has the Dahoman mark in three short parallel and perpendicular lancet cuts between the scalp and the eyebrows. He dresses simply, is often bareheaded, wears a single human tooth and blue bead attached to a thread as neck ornament and Bo-fetish against sickness, prefers iron to silver arm-rings, wore at Kana a white body-cloth of plain fine stuff with a narrow edging of watered green silk, over drawers of purple-flowered silk that hardly reached to mid thigh. His Moslem sandals were of gold-embroidered scarlet, and he smoked detestable tobacco.

A throng of royal spouses stood behind to wipe off instantly any drop of perspiration from the royal face, to hold the spittoon immediately when the royal mouth indicated a nascent disposition to spit, and all ready to rub the ground with their foreheads whenever his Majesty sneezed. When his Majesty drinks, no vulgar eye must see him do anything so ignoble; he wheels suddenly round to them, with his back to the court; the wives hide him from view with umbrellas; drums beat; distracting noises of all sorts are made, and all heads are averted, or the courtiers, if standing, dance like bears, or paddle their hands like the fore feet of a swimming dog. Amongst some tribes in the Congo country the chief's big toes are pulled when he drinks. Protected and not choked by all such ceremonial, a king of Dahomey is a long-lived animal. Eight successive kings of the present dynasty have occupied the throne during two hundred and fifty-two years. "Thus," says Captain Burton, "rivaling the seven Roman monarchs whose rule extended over nearly the same period, and had caused them to be held fabulous or typical."

The flower of the host brought forward to grace this reception was the mixed company of about two hundred young Amazons lately raised by the king. The whole court did not show a gathering of more than a thousand. Some, however, were away, attacking a village; all

who were there expressed in oration, and song, and shout, and dance, determination to deal terribly with the Abeokutans, against whom a great expedition was intended. It has since turned out that the Dahomans were very seriously worsted in that expedition. Three skulls of conquered chiefs, in various typical settings, were brought out as part of the more solemn paraphernalia of Dahoman royalty. One, for example, was the skull of a neighbouring chief, who, on the death of Gezo, Gelele's father, sent word that all men were now truly joyful, that the sea had dried up, and that the world had seen the bottom of Dahomey. He was attacked and killed, and his skull, boiled beautifully white and polished, is mounted on a ship of thin brass, a foot long. There is always wafer enough in Dahomey to float it with the mocker's skull for freight, is the grim jest intended. These skulls are without the lower jaw. The lower jaw of an enemy is prized in Dahomey for umbrellas, sword-handles, and other purposes. It is cut and torn with horrible cruelty out of the face of the still living victim.

In the presence of his Majesty the highest courtiers of Dahomey lie on their sides, and at times roll over on their bellies, or relieve themselves by standing on all fours. The king speaks to his subjects through an official, called the *Meu*, to whom his word is carried on all fours by a ceremonious middle-aged lady, called the *Dakoo*; she comes back also on all fours with any answer that may be intended for the royal ear.

Through the garden of Dahomey, Captain Burton and his party presently marched on from Kana to the capital, Abomey, or Agbome, a town with gates—from which it has its name—and without walls. The great square of Abomey looks like an assemblage of farm-yards, with a dozen long thatched barns; in fact, barracks for soldiery. The king entered his capital next day, and at Agbome, Captain Burton now resided for two months, including the period of the king's "So-sin Custom."

The word "custom" is used to mean the cost or charges paid to the king at a certain season of the year. The Grand Customs, which are more bloody than the annual rites, are performed only after the death of a king, and deferred by his successor until he is able to go through them with what he thinks to be due splendour. The Grand Customs of the present king in honour of his ancestor, were celebrated in November, eighteen hundred and sixty. The Reverend Mr. Bernasko, who was then present, tells that, on his way to Abomey, he first met a man nicely dressed as a cabboceer, who was being taken to the sea, where he would be thrown in to join the two porters of the scagate to open it for his Majesty's late father to enter in and wash himself. The following passages contain the gist of this gentleman's trustworthy account of the Grand Customs, from which it will be seen that, although the King of Dahomey did not really paddle a canoe in human blood, the slaughter was yet horrible

enough to need no such extravagant exaggeration:

"Monday, July the 16th, we all went out to meet the king, to accompany him to the town; and when we had met him he bade us sit down. We then took seats. Here a man had his hands tied, and mouth barred, with a fathom of white bast wove about his loins. He pointed him out as a messenger that was going to carry private information to his father. The poor creature was taken up to the town, and was sacrificed on the tomb of his father. Another in the same position was sent up to their large market to go and tell the spirits there what he was going to do for his father. About an hour afterwards, there were brought forward again four men in the same position, with one deer, one monkey, and one turkey-buzzard. Here the poor creatures had their heads cut off, save one. One man was to go to all the markets and tell all the spirits what he was about to make for his father; the second man was to go to all the waters, and tell all the animals there, &c.; the third man was to go to all the roads, and tell the spirit-travellers, &c.; the fourth and last man was to go up to the firmament, and tell all the hosts there, &c.; the deer to go to all the forests, and tell the beasts there, &c.; the monkey to go to all the swamps, to climb up trees, and tell all the animals there; the turkey-buzzard, fortunate creature, was let loose to fly up to the sky, and tell all the birds there. After this, he got up from his throne, which was carried along with him, and drew up his sword, and said, 'As I am now a king for this kingdom, I will bring down all the enemies of my father to my footstool. I will also go down to Abbeokuta, and do to them as they once did to my father. I will sweep them up.' He was seconded by his two chief ministers, called Mingah and Mewu, who spoke to the same effect. After the speeches, we accompanied him to the town.

"Tuesday, the 17th, he beat the gong, to fix a fortnight for the commencement of the Custom. The Europeans were quite annoyed at the time fixed, but tried to bear it with patience.

"Sunday, the 20th, the Custom commenced. On the eve of the day the whole town slept at the king's gate, and got up at five o'clock in the morning to weep. And so they hypocritically did. The lamentations did not continue more than ten minutes; and, before the king came out to fire guns to give notice to all, one hundred souls had already been sacrificed, besides the same number of women killed in the inside of the palace. Ninety chief captains, one hundred and twenty princes and princesses—all these carried out separately human beings by four and two to sacrifice for the late king. About two or three of the civilised Portuguese did the same. I believe they gave twenty men to be sacrificed, besides bullocks, sheep, goats, drakes, cocks, guinea-fowls, pigeons, coral-beads, cowries, silver money, rum, &c. After these three gentlemen, the king thought all the other proper Europeans should do the same

for him, but none performed such wicked actions.

"Wednesday, the 1st of August, the king himself came out to bury his father, with the following things: Sixty men, fifty rams, fifty goats, forty cocks, drakes, cowries, &c. The men and women soldiers, well armed with muskets and blunderbusses for firing; and when he was gone round about his palace, he came to the gate and fired plenty; and there he killed fifty of the poor creatures, and saved ten.

"Tuesday, August the 16th, we were called to the king's palace, and at the gate saw ninety human heads, cut off that morning, and the poor creatures' blood flowed on the ground like a flood. The heads lay upon swish beds at each side of the gate for public view. We went in to sit down, and soon after he sent out the property of his fathers, as follows: Two chariots, one glass wheel, seven plain wheels, three solid silver dishes, two silver teapots, one silver sugar-pot, one silver butter-pot, one large cushion on a wheelbarrow drawn by six Amazons, three well-dressed silk hammocks with silk awnings.

"Three days after, we went to see the same things. I saw at the same gate sixty heads laid upon the same place; and, on three days again, thirty-six heads laid up. He made four platforms in their large market-place, on which he threw cowries and cloths to his people, and sacrificed there about sixty souls. I dare say he killed more than two thousand, because he kills men outside, to be seen by all, and women inside, privately.

"The pit at Abomey, which was reported to have been dug deep enough to contain human blood sufficient to float a canoe, was false. There were two small pits, of two feet deep and four feet in diameter each, to contain poor human blood, but not to float a canoe."

The yearly Customs of Dahomey were first heard of in Europe in the days of the Dahoman conquest of Whydah, between the years seventeen hundred and eight and seventeen 'twenty-seven. They are periodical continuations of the Grand Customs, to keep up an annual supply of fresh attendants for the deceased king in the other world. The number of victims at a Grand Custom—and the kings being long-lived, there have been only seven such Customs in two centuries and a half—Mr. Bernasko estimates, as we have seen, at two thousand; at an annual Custom they are at most eighty, and of these none but criminals are Dahoman.

There is no fixed seasons for the annual Customs, which occur in periods between slave-hunts, dignified by the name of wars. In some years they are Atto customs, from the Atto or platform whence victims are thrown; in other years So-sin, or Horse-tie customs, so named from an attendant ceremony of loosing horses before the first of the two "evil nights" on which the Amazons slay women within the palace, and the men are slain without. Captain Burton estimates the massacre at a Grand Custom as low as a thousand, but reckoning the single victims that are despatched to give in-

formation to the dead king of his son's deeds, even when he may only have invented a new drum or received a white man's visit, the yearly sacrifices, he thinks, are altogether not less than five hundred.

LUFKIN ON DAVINGPODGE.

WHEN me and Mrs. Lufkin left Hogsmead for a week's outing, we had no intentions of intruding into any other spear than that in which we was hitherto placed. But, as luck would have it, who should we meet at the "Farmers' Cheerful Encounter," Aldersgate-street, but my wife's cousin, that wild Tom Bowsicold, who we thought was in America!

Tom told us, just—dear fellow—in his hold hoverbearing way, that when Mrs. L. and me had done the Sowhological and the Polly Ticnic, there wur but two more things for to be witnessed in London, one being a lady over the water what, every evening at nine o'clock, rode—pursued by a vultur and a squib—upon a fiery huntameable steed (that had been in training for the same for three years), in a manner not for to be often noticed in Rotting-Row. Moreover, seeing that the lady's manty-maker every day made a pint of forgetting to bring home any other riding-habit than a narrer waistband—the interest daily increased, and the house was beseeched by multitudes who had scruples against what Tom called the "regular" drama.

As Mrs. Lufkin, in language rayther stronger than I should perhaps put up with, except on an outing, refused to have anything to do with that lady, Tom informed us that the alternative was "Sperrets."

Real sperrets. Tom Bowsicold had known them, in America, fifteen year ago, and could answer for their respectability. It seemed that there lately come over two excellent and worthy gentlemen by the name of Davingpodge, what lived in a complete atmosphere of sperrets, and found them so difficult to manage, that they was always accompanied by three or four other gentlemen, for to help. No sooner had they arrived, than Tom Bowsicold (poor fellow, he is for ever taking care of other people's interests and neglecting of his own!) called upon the Mrs. Davingpodge, introduced them to his friends, and wrote to all the papers, except the Hogsmead Weekly Scrutineer, that they was "*come*." Some put in Tom's letter, some didn't, but Tom's object was gained, and the name of Davingpodge was familiar in society as a very favourite subject for disagreeing about.

"Wheer was those sperrets appearing?" asked Mrs. Lufkin, rather doubtfully.

"At Willy's his rooms," replied Tom. "But, my dear Susan, let me caution you, and Dan'l, not to apply to these philymy and mysterious unsbstances, the terms you would naturally use in reference to Mr. Buckstone or Mr. Toole. Sperrets may avail themselves of public exhibition-rooms, without descending to the level of the stage. In order to impress this important

truth upon the public mind, my friends, the Mrs. Davingpodge, have, in the most disinterested manner, fixed the price of admission at one guinea, a sum which must necessarily hexclude a considerable number of truth-seekers, but ensures, on the part of them as *does* come in, a gravity and attention befitting the hoccasion."

"A guinea, Tom!" said Mrs. L., aghast.

"Twenty-one shillings," returned Tom Bowsicold, sternly. "Wheer else, let me ask, can you find a similiar exhib—phenomenon? Did any one—I put it to you both—object to paying a guinea for to see the Phossil Child—till the proprietors, finding it was nothing of the sort, liberally reduced the price to Twopence?"

Mrs. Lufkin replied that, having never heard tell of the infant in question, she could not say, but that a guinea was a guinea, that, having no particular desire to witness a "similiar" hexhibition, it did not concern *her* whether the terms was fair or not. Finally, seeing me a little disappointed, the good soul added that, if the Mrs. Davingpodge would so far recognise husband and wife as one flesh, as to accept a guinea for the two, she would consent to attend. Tom Bowsicold assuring us that he believed his personal influence could effect this arrangement, off we set, in high spirits, for Willy's his rooms.

There was a policeman standing outside who looked at us—likewise at two or three other parties as was entering—so keenly, from head to foot, that I was inclining to ask him what he meant, when Tom jerked me on, and, taking my guinea, whispered to a gent in the lobby, and passed us in.

This is exactly what we saw, and what I mean, as sure as my name's Dan'l Lufkin, to publish (if nought else will do it) in the Hogsmead Weekly Scrutineer.

It was darkish in the room. The stage, however, was well lighted, and upon it stood a thing like my wife's clothes-press, with three doors that laid open the whole front, excepting three or four inches on each side, and showed us there was nothing within but a narrer seat full of little holes that went all round, a tambourine, a fiddle, a battered post-horn, and a heap of cords. Our admission-ticket said that the audience must be expressly limited to thirty, and we found it very near the mark, for there was only forty-two. Some was walking about, some chatting together, but all very quiet, and looking oddly about, as if they wasn't quite sure whether they had got into the right place, or not. P'raps they hadn't.

Mrs. L. was getting a little nervous.

"Wheer is Mrs. Davingpodge?" she whispered, tremulous, to Tom. "Among the sperrets?"

"Here at your elbow," answered Tom, coolly.

"How do, Arthur?"

My wife recoiled, but Mr. Arthur Davingpodge, who seemed a nice-looking young gent who was never given enough to eat, bowed, smiled, and walked away.

A friend of the Mrs. Davingpodge then invited any gentleman that pleased to come on

the stage and inspect the "preparations." Two gents promptly accepted. One of these looked to be a most respectable elderly householder, with the highest shoulders, the longest nose, and the closest eyes I ever see together; a sharp hand, I'll be bound. He peeped about him with such a air of not having been there before, that I began to think he *had*. He felt the handles and bolts of the clothes-press, pricked the panels with his penknife, as if he thought a confederal or two might be concealed within the half-inch plank, and finally looked at us under the press, which was raised on trestles, as though he would say, "You're all right in my hands, my friends. Catch them a humbugging *me*."

T'other gent, he devoted himself to the cords, examining them through a hey-glass, pulling them across his knee, and handing them down to be pulled at by us, which they was. Similiar to the first gent, there was something in *his* manner that made me think he had either been there before, or had been generally in the show-man line—he knew so very well what he was about.

When this was over, another friend of the Mrs. Davingpodge went on the stage, and proposed that we, the audience, should choose two of our "body" for to sit on the stage, keep a hey on the proceedings, and tie the knots which was going to be *hunted*. There was, at first, a great shuffling of feet, as if *all* was coming forrard, but it ended in nought. Our "body" didn't seem to know its members at all. At last, after a long pause, three gents stepped out, and, hoddly enough, one of the two as remained was the gent with the high shoulders and long nose. The other was a gentleman apparently of Jewish horigin, which nobody seemed to know.

The friend of the Mrs. Davingpodge then made another speech, saying nothing about sperrets, but giving us leave to form any opinion we liked, about what we come to see. We thought this very kind and civil, and me and Mrs. Lufkin applauded it with the big umbrella, till Tom said that was enough. After that the two Mrs. Davingpodge, which was so like each other that you couldn't tell which was *most* like, come forrard, and was tied hand and foot, one at each end of the clothes-press, the two gents pulling the cords tremendous tight indeed, and quite puffing with their exertions, so kindly made, to satisfy us that all was on the square.

As far as their legs went, I could see that *they* was pretty fast, but their hands being tied behind them out of sight, I had to take the word of the honourable high-shouldered gent, and t'other gent, that all was as tight as tight could be. The doors of the clothes-press was then shut, one at a time, and secured with a bolt by the high-shouldered gent. It was a very peculiar and hobstinate bolt, and took more than a minute to fasten. Me and Mrs. Lufkin observed afterwards, that, every time the clothes-press had to be shut, this haggeravating bolt took longer and longer to fix, the Mrs. Daving-

podge no doubt sitting quiet inside all the time.

At last all the doors was shut and fastened, and then came a wonderful thing! At a little square window, in the middle door, we saw a white hand flickering and beckoning! Presently it came out, the fingers, wrist, the whole arm, bare to the shpoulder.

"The sperrets!" shrieked Mrs. L. clutching me round the neck in her flurry.

There was a burst of applause, followed by a titter, owing to Mrs. L.'s being overheard remarking to me that, to whatever spear of being the sperrets belonged, she could see that vaccination was practised there.

The clothes-press was now thrown open, and the Mrs. Davingpodge appeared tied as they was shut in. But a gent in the audience having expressed some dissatisfaction about the knots, the friend of Mrs. Davingpodge invited any one to examine the same—whereby there stepped out a dapper little old gentleman, in large blue spectacles, who looked at them for a long time, and then said it was all right, and very wonderful, he thought.

"What's your name, sir?" asked a very stern-looking gent, in our front row.

"I am ze Baron von—" began the little man. But his voice and manner was so comical, that the audience giggled, and neither me nor Mrs. Lufkin could catch the name. It was the same whenever he spoke, so I must call him the Baron von Giggie.

The Mrs. Davingpodge's friend now asked the baron whether he felt like—which means in English, didn't object to—being tied up in the clothes-press, between the Mrs. D. The baron hesitated, but, seeing another gent coming, said something that sounded like "yah voale," and got in. The friend then said that the gas must be lowered for this hinteresting hexperiment, seeing that the hintroductio into the clothes-press of a new horganisation habsorbed more hatmosphere. It seemed to us as if the hatmosphere was more likely to absorb the Baron von Giggie. Howsoever, the baron was tied by the high-shouldered gent in what must have been, from the faces he made, a very hagonising position, and the doors was shut.

Then wasn't there a to-do! The fiddle, the tambourine, and the post-horn, seemed to be fighting, the tambourine getting punished shocking; after which, the post-horn jumped out of the little window exactly on the shoulder of the gent of Jewish horigin, who seemed very much surprised indeed, and rubbed his shoulder with a rueful expression that greatly amused the audience. After they'd had their laugh, crash went the clothes-press doors open from within, and there sat the three gents all fast tied—the Baron von Giggie crowned with the tanbourine, and the fiddle laid across his knees!

"Will you please to explain whether you felt any peculiar sensation, sir?" inquired the friend of the Mrs. D.

The baron winked, and blinked, and wriggled,

and, as well as me and Mrs. Lufkin could make out, replied:

"I zomzing on my nose felf. Over my two knees, zis fiddle I saw come. My head was wizzled in zingling brishes, like you said—buzz. So."

Tremendous applause, in which I could hear Tom Bowsicold at work with our big umbrella. After which, a circle was formed in the very middle of the room, the Mrs. Davingpodge in the centre, tied in a chair, and the lights put out. We was in total darkness, which was only to be expected, seeing what a lot of sperreted hatmosphere our forty-two horganisations must have swallered! We was told to take hold of hands all round, so as to prevent any confederals getting in—which, unless there was confederals among the forty-two horganisations, they couldn't—when the Mrs. Davingpodge untied themselves in the most obliging manner—as easy as I could lace my boots—flung the fiddle and the ropes about over our heads, rubbed phosphorus (that wouldn't glitter, being bad and apologised for) upon a guitar, to show how it was carried about in the dark, which it might, or mightn't. Then the friend of the Mrs. Davingpodge getting on a chair, informed us the phenomena was done.

Not quite. For the same unsatisfied gent as had asked the Baron von Giggie for his name, got upon another chair, and observed that, without meaning any disrespect to the Mrs. Davingpodge, if the phenomenon was done, so was *he*. He had come to see the sperrels. Whcer was they?

The friend of the Mrs. D. said he could only refer the honourable unsatisfied gent to the card hissed last Tuesday, in which, in deference to some strongish hobervations of the English press, and the council of a friend hement in littary circles—Mr. Thomas Bowsicold—the word "Phenomena" had been substituted for "Sperrets," and the public further hauthorised to call them what they pleased.

"Yet," persisted the unsatisfied gent, "by himplication, at least, you refer these phenomena, as you now call them, to something beyond what we know of nature."

"We calls it a hunrecognised law of physics," says the friend of the Mrs. D. "The Honourable Baron von—"

"Psha! 'Baron!'" returns the unsatisfied gent. "Keep to the pint. You call it a hunrecognised law of physics. Why don't you, if the words reason, common sense, fair dealing, philanthropy, have any meaning at all with you, help us to 'recognise' this law, by telling us all you think, feel, and know, of its wonderful operations? The interest would not be diminished, nay, it would augment with the progress of inquiry. Not only would guineas flow in freely, until Willy's his rooms could not hold us, but the Mrs. Davingpodge would be handed down to posterity as a great scientific name, and as one of the most honoured and honourable pioneers in the most difficult path of inquiry. So, tell us all about it."

"There is one pint the honourable gent has

overlooked," says the friend of the Mrs. D. "Our card, lately hissed, says all our necessary conditions must be complied with."

"Well, sir?" says the unsatisfied gent.

"The condition we find *most* necessary," returns the friend, "is this: That nobody asks no questions. Turn off that gas!"

"Well, Dan'l, what do you think of my friends?" asked Tom Bowsicold, as we walked away.

"That the Mrs. Davingpodge are not the worst jugglers I ever see," says I, "nor their audience the greatest fools."

AIR.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

It is a general belief, confirmed by experience, that mountain air is purer than that of the plain, and the air of the plain than that of marshes and populous cities. The purest air is that which contains only oxygen, azote, and watery vapour. The higher you climb the mountain, the further you leave the plain behind you, the purer is the air. The invigorating qualities of mountain air are accounted for by the full dose of oxygen and the smaller charge of carbonic acid which it holds. It is an undoubted fact that the liberal oxygenation of the blood sustains bodily and mental energy. So long as they can breathe freely, horses and hares run fast and far, without being distressed. In ill-ventilated schoolrooms and hospitals, attention necessarily flags, and cures are difficult to be effected. It is not the pupils and teachers, nor the doctors and nurses who are in fault, but the chimneys, doors, and windows. At the end of a ten hours' walk over the Wengern Alp, by going up-hill very slowly and breathing the exhilarating air freely, I have felt no fatigue whatever; only a little stiffness in the legs next day. In the highlands of Scotland, I have wandered among the hills all day without refreshment, and have returned to a late dinner, less fatigued than when I started: entirely owing to the air.

Perhaps the lesser proportion of carbon in the air may be one cause of the dwarf and stunted stature of Alpine plants in general. Last year, I brought home a miniature house-leek, gathered at the foot of the Jungfrau's glaciers, and planted it in a pot. In the somewhat hyper-carbonated atmosphere of a small country town, it has attained to thrice the size of any wild specimen of the species which I could find. And it cannot be the watering which has done it; for it is less regularly and constantly supplied with moisture than in its native locality. On the other hand, pear-trees are notorious for thriftiness and robust health in the smoky air of towns.

In its enormous depths, the air contains a multitude of atoms which may be regarded as the sweepings and offscourings of the atmosphere. It has been sifted and interrogated to ascertain what part it plays in phenomena attributed to spontaneous generation; and the result is, that the air disperses germs enough to render

that startling hypothesis needless. A ray of sunshine darting through a keyhole, reveals myriads of moles floating about unsuspected.

Accessory matters in the air are odours, pestilential miasms, and putrifiable vapours. In some spots, noxious gases are generated in abundance, and would accumulate to a dangerous amount, were they not swept away by storms and burnt by lightning. We do not yet know *what* it is (although we may one day discover) whose action, in concert with sulphuretted hydrogen gas, renders the neighbourhood of marshes and stagnant waters unhealthy. In marshes which cannot be drained, plantations of trees and shrubs are the best means of diminishing the danger.

Here, again, we see the analogy between the aerial and the watery oceans. The atmosphere resembles the sea, in being the receptacle of all sorts of gases and vapours, which escape into it from the earth's surface, exactly as the sea is of all sorts of waters and their solutions, which drain into it from continent and island. The air is the sewer for gaseous exhalations, as the sea is for watery liquids.

Changes in the purity of the air which are sufficient to produce disease and death, are still so really slight and subtle that they are not recognisable by chemical analysis in the laboratory, though sure to be detected by their effects on the nicer chemistry of the human frame. Several years ago, the French Academy sent out bottles, and caused specimens of air from various parts of the world to be brought home to be analysed. The nicest tests which the most skilful chemists could apply, were incapable of detecting any, the slightest, difference as to ingredients in the specimens from either side of the equator. To ascertain whether the air is everywhere identical, it was requisite to ascend to great heights, either by scaling the loftiest mountains, or through the agency of balloons. We have Saussure's observations made on the top of Mont Blanc, and Humbolt's on Chimborazo. With a clear sky, Gay-Lussac mounted in a balloon to the height of twenty thousand feet. He there found a temperature of nine degrees centigrade below the freezing-point; and he brought down air whose analysis proved it to be of the same composition, in respect to oxygen and azote, as our ordinary circumambient air here below.

Man, who is a veritable steam-engine, burns some three-quarters of a pound of carbon per day; and to burn it he requires more than a pound and a half of oxygen, which must be supplied to him by the air. A death of oxygen wears and wearies him; want of it kills him. To breathe freely in-doors, a man should have at least seventy cubic yards of air. Patients in hospitals, children in dormitories, have scarcely half the necessary mass of air. The only way of remedying the short allowance is frequently to renew the vitiated air. In rooms which have chimneys, lighting a fire is an obvious and easy means of doing so. The air in the chimney, heated by the fire, ascends and escapes; drawing

after it the air in the room which has already passed through human lungs, and which is replaced by fresh air entering at the door. No large room in which people assemble in numbers should be without a fireplace and a chimney, not so much for warmth as for ventilation. The close air of a crowded apartment which is heated by a multitude of breaths and bodies, will be cooled by lighting a small fire, as the surest and the safest way of causing a stream of fresh air to enter. Architects frequently pay too little attention to ventilation. They reckon too much on the fissures of doors and windows. Many a snug apartment is consequently unhealthy. Dr. Franklin had such faith in the virtues of fresh air, that, besides breathing all he could, when the weather was warm enough he used to take air baths for hours at a time, reading, writing, and pursuing his private occupations in the costume adopted in Paradise.

For army stables, Vauban, the famous French engineer, allowed a metre (a little more than a yard) per horse, which system lasted until 1840. Statistics show that the mortality among those horses amounted to from ninety to ninety-five per cent. Renaud (a distinguished veterinarian who carefully studied ventilation, and who died of marsh fever in Italy while watching the typhus of horned cattle) proved that, to ventilate stables properly, every horse ought to have a space of a metre and a half. This reform, put in practice, reduced the mortality to forty per cent. It has been calculated that, since Vauban's time, the narrowness of the boxes has cost the French government no less than a thousand million horses.

A curious calculator estimates that three thousand men, located on an area of an acre of ground, would, in thirty-four days, make by their own transpiration an atmosphere eighty feet in height, which, if not dissipated by winds, would instantly become pestilential. Whence towns and armies are warned of—what we only know too well.

How minute must be the atoms composing these miasms and infectious emanations, whose presence science is unable to detect! Learned and speculative men have discussed the question whether matter be infinitely divisible or not. That it is not so, is rendered probable by Lavoisier's discovery respecting the proportions in which simple bodies (or those believed to be so) enter into chemical combination. But the wonderful and extreme divisibility of matter is illustrated in various ways.

One of the most subtle divisions of solid matter is to be found in the black pulverulent state of metals. It has been supposed that all matter is black when extensively divided, because the particles are too small to reflect light; but the form of the black particles is unknown to us, because, as Mr. Alfred Smee informs us, the highest powers of the microscope are insufficient to render them visible to the eye. Professor Faraday showed a method of dividing gold to an extreme amount. He precipitated the metal from its solution by

bi-sulphuret of carbon, and obtained a ruby-coloured liquid, in which metallic gold is so minute that the particles are invisible by any microscopic power. He satisfied himself that the famous ancient ruby-stained glass owes its colour to gold in a metallic state in extremest division. By adding gelatine to the ruby solution he made a ruby jelly precisely similar. We might thus prepare "aurum potabile," drinkable or eatable gold, if the old faith in its virtue still subsisted. But what is this to the separation of particles in the air which is left in the receiver of an air-pump when pumping can go no further, and which is far from being the greatest degree of rarity which air is capable of attaining? What is it to the division of particles implied by the perfume of flowers distributed and dispersed by air? One little blossom, a lily of the valley, will scent a room; a bunch of lilies of the valley, or a bouquet of heliotrope, will make a large room unbearable and untenable by many a person of not otherwise feeble constitution. There are even flowers that are scentless, as far as our olfactory organs can perceive, which give out emanations causing headache, if kept in apartments. And what, again, is this to the scented clue which the swift-running hare leaves on the grass, enabling the keen-nosed hound to track all his labyrinthine windings and doublings? As Mr. Smee says, the human nose is literally only a rudimentary organ when compared with the olfactory nerves of several other animals. As to smells, we are in the same position as the man born blind, who can only receive his ideas of light through the medium of the eyes of others.

Water supports both the largest and the smallest living creatures which people the globe. The monstrous whale revels in the ocean, the microscopic monad in the pool and the ditch. The inhabitants of air, like those of land, have their stature confined within far narrower limits. What is the bulk of the elephant, compared with that of the larger cetaceans? What is the smallness of the smallest quadruped, compared with the minuteness of the rotifer? which yet is comparatively large, for it is often visible by the unassisted eye. The difference in the respective sizes of insects, of bats, and of birds, is still less wide than in that of quadrupeds. The very smallest gnats, flies, and moths, are known and perceptible. The air contains no aerial infusoria, no animalcules which float or fly in air, as they swim in water. The microscope has revealed, in the air, nothing analogous to the infinite multitude of smallest living creatures with which stagnant waters teem. The dervish who covered his mouth with a cloth, that he might not destroy insect life when breathing, but who unscrupulously drank water from Indian tanks, took a troublesome precaution to mighty little purpose.

Winds are air put in horizontal motion. Their influence is most beneficial. Were there no winds, the vapours that rise from the sea would be returned back from the clouds, in showers, to the very same places in the sea

whence they came. On an earth where no winds blew, we should neither have green pastures, still waters, nor running brooks. Air is more liable to pollution and corruption than water; stagnation is ruinous to it. Ceaseless motion has been given to it; perpetual circulation and intermingling of its ingredients are required of it. The necessity of ventilation in our buildings, the wholesome influences of fresh air, are universally acknowledged. The cry in cities for fresh air from the mountains or the sea, reminds us continually of the life-giving virtues of circulation.

It has been well said that the girdling encircling air makes the whole world akin. It is the laboratory for the whole animal and vegetable kingdoms. The carbonic acid with which our breathing fills the air to-day, to-morrow seeks its way round the world. The date-trees that grow round the falls of the Nile will drink it in by their leaves; the cedars of Lebanon will take of it to add to their stature. The oxygen we are breathing now was distilled for us, some short time ago, by the magnolias of the Susquehanna, and the great trees that skirt the Amazon. By the winds, superfluous water is carried off and removed to other lands, where its agency is required; or it is treasured up, as the material of clouds, in the crystal vault of the firmament, the source, when the fitting season arrives, of the showers which provide for the wants of the year.

The vertical motions of the air seem to be no less important than its horizontal change of place. The one, indeed, begets the other. Upward and downward movements in fluids are consequent upon each other, and they involve lateral movements, that is, a true circulation. The sea, with its vapour, is the great engine which gives upward motion to the air. As soon as aqueous vapour is formed, it rises. The air resists its ascent; but it is lighter than the air: it therefore forces the resisting particles of air up along with it, and so produces ascending columns in the atmosphere. The adjacent air comes in to occupy the space which that carried up by the vapour leaves behind it, and so there is a horizontal current, or wind, produced.

For ages innumerable, Earth and Water have offered to man the means of locomotion; will Air ever yield the same? If we look to probabilities only, the answer is not difficult.

Man seems to have been destined, from the very first, gradually to become master of every department and region of nature; and to urge him to do so, out of sheer necessity, he was started in life with few appliances—except his intellect. His physical and material weakness drives him to seek aid in every outward object. With comparatively powerless teeth, claws, and muscles, to protect him from an enemy, he was forced to make to himself clubs, spears, bows and arrows, and to invent gunpowder. Armed with these, he can assume the offensive against the tiger, the bear, and the elephant. His utmost swiftness is sluggishness compared with that of many other creatures, who yet do not fly; so

he bestrides the horse and employs the dog to capture the hare, the deer, and the ostrich. With no covering of his own to keep away cold and to shield his skin from wounds at each rougher contact, he is forced to spin, to weave, to fabricate armour, besides appropriating the natural clothing of better-clad animals. An eminently featherless and wingless biped, all analogy leads us to believe him fated to traverse the regions of Air. Already mounted on his locomotive, he leaves the race-horse far behind; and there is every possibility that he may one day rival the soarings of the condor, the flights of the ringdove, and the migrations of the swallow and the craue.

From the time of the Montgolfiers to the present day, this was hoped to be effected by means of balloons. Ingenuity has been exhausted in contriving methods of guiding balloons, by rudders, sails, aerial oars, and wheels. Aerial locomotion was attempted to be conducted as if a balloon were a ship. So far from being a ship, however, a balloon is not even a buoy let loose from its moorings; for a buoy floats on the *surface* of the sea; whereas, our aerial sea has no surface. If it had one, we could never reach it; and if we reached it, we could not live on it. A balloon is a jelly-fish immersed *in* a fluid, by whose every current it is helplessly carried to and fro. The jelly-fish makes feeble efforts to direct its own course, with about as much success as those of a balloon. For eighty long years, it has been the balloons themselves which have rendered the direction of balloons impossible. To contend with air, so long as you are lighter than air, is folly and absurdity. Whether you make the form of your balloon conical, spherical, cylindrical, or fish-shaped—whether you enclose your ascensional power in one or many envelopes—the negative result is ever the same. Can we even imagine a balloon making way against a high wind?

A ship is a vessel floating on the surface of one fluid, the sea, than which it is altogether specifically lighter, and shaping its course through the impulse of forces, the winds, which exist in *another* fluid, the air, in which it is also partly immersed. Half of it is in one fluid, and half of it in another. If we substitute, to impel the vessel, the force of oars or of steam for that of the wind, the ship must still remain at the surface of contact of sea and air, in order that she may be supported by the heavier, and that her crew may breathe the lighter fluid.

It is clear, therefore, that, to traverse the air with the power of directing our own course, we must imitate, not the drifting of the jelly-fish nor the thistle-down, but the flight of birds in air, and of bladderless fishes in water. We must press on the medium in which we move, with violent mechanical (since we have not sufficient muscular) force. To mount in the air, and exercise self-direction in it, we must be specifically heavier than air. To master the air, instead of being its plaything, we must find a support in it, instead of serving it as a cushion. The bird, which is specifically heavier than air, contrives

to be supported by it: man must contrive to do the same.

We may ascend in the air by the help of a screw. There is a toy for children, something like the sails of a mill set in rapid rotation by pulling a string, which performs the feat. Mill sails are not "sails," but portions of a screw. The screw of a steamer is a mill-sail working in water, only it acts *upon* the water instead of being acted on *by* the wind. By applying the same principle we may mount in the air. The screw will bore into the air as a gimlet bores into wood; the one will drag after it its motive power, exactly as the other drags its handle after it. With the screw as the mechanism and steam as its mover, the problem enters the domain of technology, which is the glory of the present epoch. People are quite at liberty to make big eyes and shrug their shoulders. It is some encouragement to remember how once we were told that the iron wheel of a locomotive on an iron rail would slip round and round without advancing; that if the locomotive did advance, the first cow it met on the railroad would stop it; and that if it did upset the obstructive cow, it would run on so quickly as to kill the passengers by stopping their breath.

Once up, broad wings will enable us to sweep and to glide like a kite or an eagle. Progressive motion may be effected by copying the undulating flight of the wagtail and the woodpecker: only instead of measuring our inclined planes by yards deep, we may reckon on making them by furlongs.

BLOTTED OUT.

THOUGH it was not a pity which showed itself in any active form of sympathy, the neighbourhood did sincerely feel for the two ladies left so entirely alone in the world. They had plenty of money, certainly; a good house and a pretty garden; and as the legacy of poverty aggravates even the loss of a father (which in this case, however, was rather a relief than a loss), one might imagine a worse fate than that of Martha and Hester Todyeare, pitiable as theirs was; for, save this one exception of money, there was not a social circumstance in their lives which the poorest need envy.

Their father, William Todyeare, a passionate, self-willed man, had married a woman of a station much inferior to his own. He had married her because he had been obliged to take her on her own conditions; but he revenged himself for the force put upon him in the ordering of their relations by not acknowledging her as his wife, and letting her appear only as his house-keeper—and the mother of his two daughters. She was not a woman of the Griselda class, and could never bring herself to endure her wrongs in silence, but told the world, whenever it came in her way, the story of her sufferings and the fact of her marriage, leaving it to form its own conclusions. And the conclusion to which it came, almost unanimously, was to

avoid Fellfoot altogether, and leave the Tod-yeares to manage their family affairs by themselves as they liked. People do not like to be made the confidants of suffering wives; and when the question in dispute is marriage or illegality they would rather not give their votes at all, but let judgment go by default. As in this case. Wherefore, when the father died, his two daughters, who had been under a cloud all their lives—unoffending as they were coming in for at least reflected disesteem—had not an acquaintance in the world, and were as much alone as if they and their servants were the sole inhabitants of a desert island.

Mr. Todycare was a man whose wrong-doing was rather insanity of temper than hardness of heart; so that when his temper was no longer crossed his conscience took the ascendant and tormented him fiercely—his faculty of repentance being as illimitable as his evil will had been resolute. When his wife died and the daily fret of her will in opposition to his own was at an end, he fell into a deep melancholy, which finally became a monomania of remorse for the hard life he had led her, and the injustice he had done her: not an active madness—merely a morbid, quiet kind of insanity, which gave an additional horror to the life and place; but no danger. The world said it was a judgment on him for his sins: so it was, but not in the way they thought.

It would have been no wonder if the whole family had gone raving mad, for Fellfoot was the most melancholy place to be found within the four seas. It was far away from any other house, and stood in a craggy hollow surrounded by woods. Woods and crags rose everywhere and kept the air in the basin below as stagnant as the water of a pond. The smoke rose straight from the chimneys of Fellfoot, when, in the villages beyond, houses were unroofed and forest trees uprooted in the gale; and the autumn leaves fell in quiet showers, like the pattering of rain on the ground, when the winds, elsewhere, stripped them with frantic fury from the boughs. Sometimes, indeed, a whirlwind caught the sides of the basin, eddying round and round among the woods till the dead leaves were piled up in thick drifts, where a man might be lost standing upright: so with the snow: but in general the air was still and dead, reeking with the vapours from the woods, and oppressive with the varied scents of vegetation; in autumn-time unhealthy, and even in spring and summer unrefreshing. The house was entirely hidden from view, save at one certain point in the road leading to it. It might have been burnt to the ground, and no one would have seen a flame; and every inmate in it might have been robbed and murdered, and the busy world beyond would not have heard a sound and might not have known for days. For it stood away from the main road, lost in this deep hollow, and the one approach to it was by a steep and rugged road, almost dangerous even with sure-footed horses; consequently, the very tradespeople called at Fellfoot as seldom as they could, and the mono-

tony of life was nearly unbroken. Nothing but one eternal view—the same from every window in the house, look where you would: nothing but trees—trees; gold and green, and white with blossom, and flushed with crimson veinings in the spring-time, truly; and gorgeous with all imaginable hues of scarlet and gold and russet and darkening bronze in the autumn; else of one uniform outline, of one eternal sameness.

To this inheritance, then, the two sisters, Martha and Hester Todycare, had succeeded. The Todycare were of Gorman origin, and the name had been Todtjahr in earlier times; but it had got softened out of its former grim meaning into what gave local etymologists, ignorant of German, wide scope for wild derivations. They still retained the German look, and both were fair; but Martha, the elder, was a brown-haired woman, and tall and strong and resolute, with a square brow and a set jaw, yet kind and comely too; a woman with something of the masculine element in her, but not less than woman all the same. Hester, shy and timid, and with all her lines soft and flowing, was one of those golden-headed scrapp-women, made up of love and fear, who get more cared for than the rest of the world, because they have no fibre in them, no power of resistance or of self-support or of will—very sweet and lovely and feminine, but who live and die more girls to the last: people for whom the strong invariably sacrifice themselves, or to whom they are sacrificed.

There was a great difference in age between them; Martha being ten years the elder, which made her more mother than sister, for the mother had not lived beyond the little one's first childhood, and Martha had, therefore, taken her entirely to herself. And as no governess was allowed at Fellfoot, and no companions of their own age ever invited, even if any could have been found willing to come, it had been a very entire taking to herself. And, as a consequence, the whole force of the two natures, intensified by the isolation of their lives, had concentrated into one deep love for each other—Martha's the maternal love of the stronger, and Hester's the dependent love of the child, with that other faculty of hers, her fear, reserved for her father. There was no one else to love or fear, for they did not know the only relatives they had, Faber and Susan Todycare (the Faber Todycare as they were generally called), the children of the younger brother, but older than both these sisters; Susan being older than Martha, and Faber, the elder, almost old enough to be Hester's father. There had been a coolness between the two families ever since William Todycare, of Fellfoot, had married his housekeeper.

The funeral had taken place three days ago, and the two sisters were sitting in the garden together. It was in the hot and sultry summer time, when the woods looked unfathomable, and when the air was almost tropical with heat and steaming vapours; it was one of those lowering summer days when the angry temper of the atmosphere seems to react on men, and to breed angry tempers in the soul. Its only effect on

the sisters was to make Martha more silent, and Hester more timid and easily startled than usual. They were sitting now on the seat under the great cedar-tree on the lawn; and as the spreading branches stretched over them, throwing them into deep shadow, you might have fancied they were women of death sitting in the gateway of the tomb; nothing more funereal could be seen anywhere than those two in their deep mourning—Martha with her close black cap covering all her hair, and Hester with her golden uncurled tresses falling over her face like a veil for her sorrow—as they sat under the great cedar-tree in what might have been a garden of graves, for its solitude and desolateness.

Looking up from a small piece of work she held in her hand, Martha said, suddenly, "It is dull for you here, Hetty."

Hester opened her clear childlike eyes, and put back the crowding hair from her face. "Dull?" she said, in a tone of surprise. "I am very happy here with you, Martha; what more do we want than we have got?"

"You are young, dear, and ought to see a little of the world. We have money, and could travel, if you would like it; or our cousins have asked us to stay with them, if you would like that better. I had a letter from Susan this morning; 'Faber will be here to-day,' she says."

"To-day!" echoed Hester, in a voice of dismay. "How I wish he was not coming!"

"So do I; but that does not answer my question about going away."

"I will do as you like, Martha," Hester replied, meekly; "but I hate gaiety, as you know."

"Dear child!" interrupted her sister, smiling, "have you ever known it?"

Hester smiled too. "Not much of it, certainly," she said; "but you understand me, don't you?"

"Yes. Still I think a little change would do you good, my dear. You are too depressed here, and I have seen how nervous you have become lately. I should like you to leave Fell-foot for a little while."

"Me to leave!" cried Hester, with quick alarm; "not without you, Martha."

"Certainly not. There, see how that has fluttered you!—but both together; perhaps to Switzerland in the spring, after a winter in Paris or Italy. Would you like that better than Greymoor and the Faber Todyeares?"

"Oh, anything better than that!" cried Hester. "I have such a strong presentiment against those people."

"So have I," said Martha; "but such feelings are very foolish, and, indeed, wrong if indulged in."

"Who is that?" Hester exclaimed, pointing to the one turn of road which they could see from the garden.

It was a solitary horseman, picking his way down the steep path carefully.

"I dare say that is Faber Todyeare," said

Martha; and she, too, turned a little pale, and her teeth set themselves together as if she had a task before her both difficult and disagreeable.

Soon the horseman was out of sight, lost in the windings of the wood-path; and presently they heard the gate-bell ring loudly as he reined his horse at the entrance. The servant opened the gate, and a tall, dark, handsome man, first asking if the ladies were at home, dismounted and came quickly towards them.

"How like papa," said Hester, shrinking away. "Oh, Martha, he has come for no good."

Why did she say that? It is not usual for young women to regard the advent of handsome cousins with displeasure or terror, and Faber Todyeare was one whom most girls would have welcomed very cordially; yet both sisters shrank from him, in their several ways, as if he had been something terrifying or frightful. He was neither. He was a tall, handsome, manly-looking person, with nothing specially noteworthy about him, save a blandness of manner that seemed a little excessive and out of harmony with his character, as judged of by his face. That a man with inscrutable eyes, pent-house brows, a flat forehead, a broad jaw, and thin, closely shut lips, should be as gracious and gallant as a Bath M.C.—that so supple a back should lead up to so stern a head, might seem, to a close observer, out of course and misfitting; yet there was nothing about him to which the most fastidious could object, so perfectly well bred, well looking, and well appointed was he.

He raised his hat as he came near them, and held out his hand. Martha gave him hers with strange coldness, Hester with repugnance.

"I am sorry I could not come in time," he said; "I should have liked to pay the last respects to my poor uncle."

Martha slightly moved her head. "Thank you," she said; and that was all.

"I suppose his last moments were peaceful? they generally are in such cases as his," he asked. "Did he recover at all? I mean, was he sane at any time before his death?"

"Sane! he was never insane," said Martha, bluntly. "He was depressed and melancholy, but he never lost his intellects."

Faber smiled blandly, but unpleasantly. "He left a will, that means?" he said, with his interrogative accent; "one made quite of late, I presume?"

"He left no will," said Martha, and looked him straight in the face.

"Indeed!" and as he spoke he glanced round him, at the house and garden and the woods about, as if with a new interest. This did not escape his cousin.

"He wished my sister and myself to inherit equally, so there was no need for any will," she added.

Again Faber Todyeare raised his heavy eyebrows and smiled.

"The very reason why he should have made one, while his mind was capable of an inde-

pendent act, and in such a condition that the law would recognise its acts as valid," he observed.

"The law gives the same award as his wishes," said Martha, steadily. "His only children, we share alike; and it is not probable that we shall ever have divided interests."

"I think you labour under a mistake," said Faber; "the law"—emphatically—"will award differently."

"Hester, my dear, go and see if dinner is nearly ready," said Martha to her sister. "I dare say Mr. Todycare" (neither had called the other cousin yet, and he had not given them any name at all) "will dine with us while his horse is resting."

And Faber smiled, and looked at Hester graciously, and said, "Yes, he would remain very gladly," and thanked them for their kindness.

When they were alone, Martha, turning to her cousin, said abruptly: "So, you have come to dispute the property, Mr. Todycare?"

He bowed.

"I have come to claim it," he replied; "there are no grounds for dispute. You know as well as I, that the law does not recognise a man's illegitimate children, however openly he may have done so. Had your father wished you to inherit his property, he would have made a will while sane and capable of managing his own affairs; with a will of late date—since his mind went, or with none at all, your claims are absolutely worthless. I am sorry to speak with such seeming harshness, but you are a woman to whom, I am sure, one can speak of business matters plainly."

"I told you in my letter that you were mistaken," returned Martha. "My mother was lawfully married, nearly two years before I was born."

He shrugged his shoulders, and again smiled.

"I have the certificate," said Martha, flushing a little, and speaking with a certain hurried and peremptory accent; "and this."

She pointed to a ruby ring she wore, inside which was engraved her mother's name, her father's, and the date of their marriage, with "married" set against the date. Perhaps not of much value as legal evidence, but of infinite preciousness to Martha, as it had been to her mother.

"What is that?" asked Faber, contemptuously. "Allow me," and he held out his hand for it.

She drew it from her finger, and gave it to him, calling his attention to the letters inside. He looked at it intently, both at the engraving and the stone, for it was a balass ruby of large size, and intrinsically worth much. Then he gave it back to her with a smile, shaking his head, as he said:

"Counsel would say, 'the clever dodge of an artful woman.' If your claims rest on no more solid foundation than this, and if your proofs are of no greater legal value, the question will soon be decided."

"You forget the certificate," said Martha.

"Ah! the certificate! That is something more to your purpose. Yes, I confess I should like to look at this certificate, if you will allow me; it is the first time I have heard of it, and I am curious."

"You shall see it," Martha said loftily; and they both walked across the lawn, and through the opened French window into the drawing-room, where Martha left him, while she went up-stairs to her own room for those sacred "marriage lines," which were her own and her sister's all.

"You keep this in a safe place, I suppose?" asked Faber, carelessly, while examining it with even more attention than he gave to the ring.

"Yes," Martha answered; "it is never out of my own possession: I keep it with my valuables in my own room."

"Ah! the best place," said Faber.

After turning the paper about, and looking at it in every light, as if he would have detected a forgery in the very substance of the paper itself—after counting up dates, and comparing handwritings, knitting his brows with anxious meaning as he was slowly and reluctantly obliged to acknowledge the truth, Faber handed back the certificate, and pronounced himself satisfied; thanking his kind cousin—he called her cousin now—for her patience and candour, and begging her to dismiss from her mind all remembrance of the fact that he had ever been so misled by ignorance and common report as to doubt the exact legality of their condition. He was very glad he had come himself, he said, and had made personal acquaintance with his cousins: he thought it so much the best thing to do at all times, and nothing was ever lost by frankness and candour. If he had delegated this task to a lawyer, what a bungle would have been made of it! but now, everything was as clear as daylight, and there was no possibility of further mistake remaining. They had all done their duty, and was not that a pleasure to think of? He then wound up a slightly too florid oration by inviting them both to Greymoor; where, at least, he could promise them a somewhat different kind of prospect—laughing—to what they had here, for save in their own garden, there was not a tree nearer than a day's journey!

To which Martha replied, a little bluntly, perhaps, but good naturedly enough, that she and her sister were not much given to visiting, or great runaways from home. Then she added: "My sister knows nothing of the doubts which were thrown upon our mother's marriage; of what good to perplex and distress one so young and innocent?"

And Faber said, "Of what good?" too; and commended her wise care with almost enthusiastic appreciation. Dinner being ready, he asked his kind cousin's leave to go up-stairs to make his toilette.

It was a pleasant house, he said, when he returned, and capital rooms; and the conversation fell upon the size and disposition of them, all in the most natural and easy manner possible; and

yet Martha did not like the talk. To a reserved woman it was a little too much like a freedom to pry so narrowly into the personalities of their domestic life; but Faber was a man difficult to withstand on any point which he might choose to press, there was so much blandness and friendly confidence of manner united to so much resoluteness of purpose and distinctness of aim. Which did not much assuage Martha's discomfort, or make her more affectionately inclined to their cousin, or disposed to discuss the sites and aspects of the Fellfoot bedrooms with greater pleasure.

On the whole, the sisters had never passed a more uncomfortable time than they did during this visit, and, indeed, as the hours wore on, Hester's dislike became only too apparent. She sat as far away from Faber as was possible, her head bent over her work, seldom looking up, and never speaking unless spoken to, and then she gave only curt cold answers, looking at Martha while speaking to her cousin. But he seemed to be much struck with her; and truly she was a rarely beautiful creature—and almost persecuted her with his attentions and compliments, seldom taking his eyes from her, and doing what he could to engage her attention and win a pleasant look for his reward. But the girl sat resolutely, almost sulkily, apart, in what would have been a rude display of temper and caprice, but for the pleading sweetness of her timid manners and the softening charm of her beauty.

Heartily glad were they when the moment came for his leave-taking, and they were rid of his handsome face and flattering smiles. Their solitude came like a delicious repose to them after the weariness of this man's visit; and the two sisters sat together rather later than usual, and even more lovingly than usual, as if to enjoy to the fullest the one true happiness of their lives. But their comments on their cousin were none of the most complimentary, and their determination not to know him better, and by no means to go to Greymoor, very distinct. Then they went to bed, and the house was shut up for the night; if, indeed, that could be called "shutting up," which was merely locking the front door, and leaving half the windows open. The utter solitude of the place had made them careless, and the nightly fastening of Fellfoot had grown to be a mere name. The sisters always slept with their windows open; not so much as a stray cat invading the premises in general; and to-night—this hot, stifling, thundery night—the house was like a pierced fan, open at all sides to catch the faintest breath of air stirring.

At about midnight the storm burst forth. It had been brooding all the day, and when it came it came with terrific violence; but, strangely enough, it did not rouse the household—not even Hester at the first, constitutionally susceptible to all the influences of electricity as she was. At last one tremendous flash, followed by a deafening roar, woke her up; and just in her night-dress as she was—without slippers or

wrapper—she softly opened her bedroom door, and crept across the passage to take refuge with her sister; wondering, indeed, why she had not come to her, as she generally did when there was a thunderstorm, knowing her nervousness.

She found the door, turned the handle, and went in; but as she entered her foot slipped in something strange, something thick and wet and warm. She shuddered and called "Martha," but no one answered; again she cried; and then a flash, flaming through the air, showed her the body of her sister, with her face downward to the carpet, lying in a shining pool of crimson on the floor. But it did not show her that other thing crouched in the dark corner beyond.

"Martha! Martha!" Hester whispered, and touched her, kneeling by her; and kneeling in the warm, wet, crimson pool. Again the lightning flashed, showing now the white night-dress, her hands and the drooping lengths of her golden hair, all dyed crimson—all wet and soaked in blood.

"Martha! Martha! Wake! Speak to me!" cried Hester, turning the dead face towards her; but the head fell heavily back in her arms, and there was no kind voice to answer her.

Then the truth came upon the girl, and saying, "Take me with you!" she flung her arms over the dead body, and sank senseless—her pale head resting on her sister's neck, and from head to foot crimsoned with her blood.

The man crouching in the corner came and looked at them both; turning the dark lantern in his hand full upon them while he stood and studied them; and once carefully putting back the blood-stained hair from Hester's face, he stooped down and kissed her lips, and kissed them again, with a strange pleasure. Then he cut a long look from her head, and turning away, continued his search for what he wanted: all the while as quiet and unmoved and resolute as if murder was an every-day occurrence, and need stir no man's nerves. When he had found what he wanted, he looked again at the two lying on the floor, and taking up Martha's hand, drew the ruby ring from her finger; and guided now by the flashes of the fierce tempest, he went softly out by the way by which he had entered, letting himself down from the window noiselessly.

As the morning broke the storm passed, and when the servants came to call their mistress it was a glad fresh summer day: the woods were alive with the songs of birds and the hum of bees; the trees and flowers were radiant with freshened bloom, and rich in scents; the blue sky had not a cloud, and the green earth did not seem to have a care—but within that quiet room lay one sister stabbed to the heart, and the other paralysed and imbecile.

It had been done for plunder, every one said: Martha's costly ruby ring was gone; and the davenport, in which she kept her money and valuables, was rifled; and though some things which, it might have been thought, would have tempted a thief, were left, others were taken, and all was in confusion. No one knew, indeed, though, what had been taken; for

Martha Todyeare was not a communicative woman, and even Hester was never told of any business matter; so that it was only conjecture at the best. One thing, however, was sure, the ring—and, presumably, money, from the rifled state of the davenport. This was all that was ever known; and who had done the deed no one could imagine, or why, unless for plunder; and yet, if for plunder, why had not certain valuables been taken, lying handy as they did? It was conjectured that the assassin had got in by the open window, climbing up by the ivy which grew thick over the house, and favoured by the storm which drowned any noise he might have made. Martha had been struck down, perhaps while crossing the room, probably to go to her sister. There was no sign of any struggle, and she lay in the position in which a person would have fallen if struck from behind. There was no expression of terror on her face, as would have been had she seen her assailant; but it was calm and still as usual, showing that at least she had been spared the anguish of knowledge: which was something.

Faber was just leaving the inn, where he had put up for the night (having lost his way between Fellfoot and the railway inn where he was rightly bound, so taking refuge here, at midnight or after, drenched to the skin with the terrible storm), when the fearful news of the murder came in. The Fellfoot gardener, half scared himself, had ridden over to the village for legal assistance; for the two ladies were so lonely there was no one to turn to as of course, and the law must do its business without the intervention of any friend. When it was found that Faber was still within distance, to him was at once given the superintendence of matters and the charge of Hester; and all with whom he was brought in contact expressed their satisfaction with him, so kindly, so prompt, so considerate as he was, and so anxious for the welfare of his poor young cousin.

The world was quite at rest on the subject of Hester Todyeare, when Faber's sister Susan came down to Fellfoot, and at once stepped into Martha's place of head and manager. Hester, indeed, was unfit to undertake any kind of responsibility. Still gentle, lovely, timid, she showed only one active feeling—and that was an intensity of hatred for Faber, and a childlike dread of Susan.

Susan was not unlike what Martha might have been if harder, older, and sterner; Martha, with all her womanly tenderness left out, and her strength roughened and sharpened to hardness and aggressiveness. They carried Hester off to Greymoor for change of air. It was of no use her protesting or refusing; she was in their hands, and there was no one to help her out of them. So they took her to their own house, and people said they hoped the change would do her good, poor girl; but it was not a pleasant charge her cousins had taken on themselves, for who would like to have a dazed half-idiot always about them? Indeed, from the first Susan seemed to have felt it as a painful duty that

must be accepted, doing her best to perform her part as well as was in her nature to allow; but she could never conquer the girl's visible terror of her, nor could Faber overcome her hatred, and the more he tried with flatteries and caresses and tender little cares—cares so tender that one could scarcely understand how they came from so strong and stern a person—the more pronounced was her hatred, her horror, and her fear.

Greymoor was, as he had said, the very antithesis of Fellfoot—a wild, lonely, desolate moor, without a tree or shrub anywhere; an illimitable horizon lost in the restless sea for half the distance round, the other half leading down into a broad open country, showing villages and shady copselands, meadows full of sheep and cattle, and churches with their flame-shaped spires pointed ever up to heaven, and all the sweet pastoral richness of English country life; but this only in the distance—a peace and sweetness not belonging to the dwellers in that desolate house on the moor; like happiness seen in other's lives, but not coming near our own.

But the change from the damp low-lying house at Fellfoot did Hester the physical good people had anticipated; her cheek lost a little of its cream-coloured, corpse-like look and got rosier in hue, and more transparent; her eyes were less fixed and more observant; she ate more as if she knew that she was eating, and not only as if it was a merely instinctive act of obedience; she lifted her feet from the ground when she walked, and did not drag them, as she had done; sometimes the tears came into her eyes as if she was thinking, and sometimes her colour changed; she would answer now when spoken to, instead of, as hitherto, sitting dumb and motionless until Faber came near her, when she would flame up into a passion of wrath more terrible because more mad than even her stupor had been; or when Susan touched her, and then she would utter a little cry as if she had been hurt, and shrink away from her as a half-tamed animal might have done. Now, however, all this had become modified, and some of her symptoms had wholly disappeared; and by the time she had been nearly a year at Greymoor she was the same as other people, saving always her intense timidity, and the wonderfully touching sweetness of her beauty. Lovely as she had always been, she was now almost unearthly; and looked, as an old woman said of her, "as if she had been in heaven for a time."

The year was round again, and it was a warm calm summer's evening, with the wind blowing softly from the south, like the days of rest which sometimes come before a death. Hester was in the garden, sitting where she could see the sea—her favourite place; and Susan and Faber were standing by the window in the dining-room talking low together.

"I do not like it, Faber," said Susan; "if it is against her consent, it will be a crime."

"Crime or no, it must be," said Faber, in a

stern voice; "if I do not marry her, we are ruined."

"Yes, yes, I know all that; you have told me often enough! I only say that I do not like the poor thing to be forced; and she certainly does not seem inclined to make a willing bride."

"I have love enough for two, and will enough as well," said Faber.

His sister looked at him with genuine surprise. "Do you mean that you love her?" she asked, slowly.

"As I never loved before, and could never love again," he answered. "I have loved her from the beginning, and if even she was not a necessity by circumstances, she should be my wife by my own free will and act of love."

"You are mad," said Susan, disdainfully; "I should as soon have thought of your loving a doll."

"I dare say you would," he answered, with indifference; "but you see you do not know much about love."

"Still, I shall not like her to be forced," said Susan, going back to the point.

"She shall be my wife, forced or not," repeated Faber; and left the room.

What he had said about their being ruined was only too true. More than a year ago this had come upon them, not by their own fault so much as through the crafty advice of their lawyer, who had persuaded Faber to invest in certain mining speculations in which he held a large stake, and at a time when he knew the property was worth nothing. A convenient way of shifting his own liabilities and saving himself—not uncommon among friends. Which state of things made Hester in truth a necessity, as he had said; and willing or unwilling, she had to be wooed and won, even if she was never won. And yet he resolved to win her. A man of strong passions and arbitrary will cannot easily accept defeat; and whatever the secret charm to him which Susan could not discover, the result was, he loved her, and he was determined that she should love him—after marriage it not before.

When he left his sister he went out to Hester sitting in the garden, watching the white ships sailing—sailing, who knew where? watching them with that vague wistfulness one feels so often when looking at the sea, that desire one scarcely knows for what, but for something removed from our present life. Faber stood by her for some time, studying her face as she looked and dreamed; then he said, in a low, soft voice, softer and richer than usual, and it was always soft to her: "Would you like to travel, Hester?"

Her eyes filled with tears. She remembered who had asked the same question just about a year ago, and how it had been answered.

"I should like to leave Greymoor," she said.

"You do not like it?"

"No; you know that I do not," she answered, quietly, and turned away.

"You can go where you like, Hester," Faber

said. "We are your friends, not your jailers. Where would you like to go?"

"Home," said Hester, and looked into his face.

He blenched a little; but then he took her hands and held them, though she tried to release them. "You shall go to Fellfoot next week, or earlier—as soon as you will; on one condition," he said, speaking slowly and deliberately, though still very softly; "that you take me with you, as one having the right to be there—the right to be by your side."

"What do you mean?" she said, startled.

"That you take me with you as your husband!"

She gave a cry and covered her face, he having loosed her hands to put his arms round her waist.

"It must be, Hester," he continued. "I love you, and I have vowed to Heaven to make you mine."

"To Heaven!" she cried, lifting up her white face. "What have *you* to do with Heaven, cousin Faber?"

He shrank back as if she had struck him, and then, as if fearing she would escape him, he drew her to him again, and made her sit down on the seat by him. "Hester," he then said, speaking calmly as to voice and manner, though passions too hot for words were raging in his heart, "you believe that you are the owner of Fellfoot, do you not? Yes, I see that you do. Listen to me attentively. You are not the owner; it belongs to my sister Susan and myself, as the heirs-at-law of your father. You and your poor sister were not his heirs, Hester—you were illegitimate: your mother was never married." He paused, waiting for her to speak; but she said nothing. "At this moment," he continued, "you have absolutely nothing in the world but what you receive through me. I have not cared to bring this before you hitherto. I have waited until time had a little healed and restored you, before touching on matters that must be so painful to you, my poor child! Also, I have waited until I spoke to you of my love, reserving this as an argument to decide you. It must be, Hester; your only safety lies by my side. You must marry me that you may live."

"I will not!" cried Hester, tearing herself away from him. "I will die first."

"You will, you must, and you shall," returned her cousin, in an inflexible, monotonous voice. "If I carry you to the church in my arms like a child, you shall be my wife. I love you, and in your own interests I will make you love me!"

"Never!" she cried, flinging up his hand. "I hate you! You are terrible and loathsome to me—you are telling me lies—you are all over blood!"

And as she spoke the red sunset poured over him, as if it did indeed shine through blood.

They did not meet again that evening; for Hester rushed to her own room, the door of

which she locked, and no threats or entreaties of either brother or sister could induce her to open it again—scarcely to answer when she was called and spoken to.

Pale, restless, seeking she knew not what, but seeking Something, Hester wandered through the house that night like a ghost come up from the grave. Moving with her light noiseless tread, and shading the candle with her hand, she went down stairs, and into the library—her cousin Faber's own peculiar room. Haunted she knew not with what—lured on she knew not to what—she opened drawers and desks and cupboards, searching, searching for something—that nameless Something which always had been before her mind as one day to be found. At last she tried a certain desk; it was locked, but by some oversight the key had been left in the lock, though Faber was in general both careful and exact. She opened it, and turned the contents—papers, trifles, letters—over and over; but she found nothing to interest her. She opened some little packets, and some small boxes; but the locks of hair, and the rings, and the lockets, and little scraps of verses they contained, were nothing to her. At last she fell upon a packet sealed and secured with more than ordinary care. She broke the seals; she cut the string; and took from the cover a paper which she soon made out to be her mother's certificate of marriage, a long lock of golden hair, and the ruby ring which had been stolen from her sister the night she was murdered.

Now she understood what had haunted her poor bewildered brain, and what had lured her on till she had found it; now she knew what she had dumbly divined; and both the past and herself were revealed to her. Quietly, with ashen cheeks and glazed eyes, she glided up-stairs again; the house yet in its first heavy sleep, and she walking so softly she would not have roused even one who watched. Still shading the candle with her hand she stopped at her cousin's door; she tried it, it was unfastened; and softly opening it she glided in, and went up to the bed where he lay sleeping.

For a moment she stood and watched him, as he tossed his dark head restlessly on the pillow, muttering in his sleep. Then she touched his hand, bending her face near to his and calling him by his name. He started up with a man's shout of defiance; a shout that passed into a low moan of abject terror when he saw that ghastly face pressed so near to his, the glistening hair streaming round it and falling on to the bed-clothes, and the slight figure, looking still slier in its melancholy black, bending over him. In one hand she held the paper, the ring, and the lock of hair; in the other the candle; and the light fell on the ruby and the gold in strange fantastic brilliance.

"I told you that you were all over blood, Faber," she said, in a low penetrating voice. "Now I know it. Do not ask me to forgive you; I do not forgive you."

In the morning a great cry went through the house. Still fully dressed, and with all her hair combed straight on her shoulders like a parted veil of gold, Hester was found lying on her bed, stone dead and cold and stiff. No sign of struggle nor of any means of self-destruction was about; no poison, no blood, no knife, no cord: a quiet pale waxen figure, lying as if asleep, and full of maidenly sweetness and beauty even in its death.

The verdict was, "Died by the visitation of God;" the medical men said "Syncope of the spine;" and no one was ever heard to say it was an unrighteous verdict, or that any other could have been returned. If there was one who knew more than the rest, he passed through life unchallenged and unsuspected. The dead told no tales, and the ruby ring which Faber Todycare always wore now, was like the dead, and betrayed nothing.

But though Fellfoot and all the property belonging to the two sisters came by right and law now to Faber and Susan, and though their ruined fortunes were repaired without the world ever knowing that they had been endangered, yet their prosperity brought no blessing with it. Susan died before that year's fruits were ripened in the Fellfoot gardens; and for all his life after Faber Todycare was a haunted, hunted, broken-down man, to be met wandering about the earth, without rest or peace or love or home; a miserable wretch whom some called mad, but of whom the priest who saw him die in a lonely little village in France, said with a long-drawn breath, as he closed his eyes: "That man was a murderer."

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER VII. THE HOUSE IN CLARGES-STREET.

CAPTAIN FERMOR, having now done with the army, and failed in his Indian profession, had been washed ashore on the great London strand. How interminable that strand is; how barren, how miserable, for all such new waifs and strays, has been over and over again proved. Fermor, a young man, and, as men go, not by any means a dull man, met with a few stray inhabitants on this lonely coast, running down from their huts; that is to say, from a club or two; but in London practically he had only a few acquaintances, and scarcely any friends.

He had come home with Sir Hopkins, had passed up through the south of France, and had made that dramatic morning call just as he had promised. He had heard of Violet's death, and had been affected, but that was long before. He was not well off: he stopped with this family rather longer than a mere morning call required, and, before very long, the marriage was settled on, and it was known that "Fermor had picked up an heiress," and also "an old father." There was some truth in this last odd expression, for Mr. Carlay gave his daughter fifty thousand pounds, after this fashion: It was conveyed to trustees for "her use for life," and afterwards to Fermor absolutely.

"I cannot live without my daughter," he said, half piteously. "You might cut me off water, or bread, or meat, or even air. I have lived with her always; I cannot part with her now in my old age. I will make it up to you. You shall see I shall. I know how young married people do. If it was settled on her, you would soon come to think me in the way, and I should have to go. Now I shall have a stake in the house. No, no. I will do everything; you shall see."

Fermor smiled at this foolish eagerness. It was an exceptional arrangement certainly, but after all he was a quiet old man—clay in a fashionable potter's hands—and the consideration was abundant. Thus the house was furnished and made splendid, and thus a little room at the top of the first flight, leading to the drawing-room, where there was a greenhouse, a study,

and a bedroom, became Mr. Carlay's home, where he read French and Spanish books. It rolled on very smoothly for some weeks. Then Fermor began to weary a little.

Fermor alone, and Fermor doubled, were two different things in fashionable life. He had hung a millstone of disability about his own neck. Young Mrs. Fermor could not show her passports, or her papers were not "in rule." A pleasant wandering man was always welcome: he filled in gaps in the ranks. But when it was given out that he had married "some low creature," and the knowing him entailed knowing the low creature, it was perceived that the game was not altogether worth the candle. And thus it was that in crowded London he began to find himself in a sort of elegant desert.

Thus he did not at all relish. He loved the old incense, the incense which in private drawing-rooms ladies were accustomed to swing before him from little feminine censers. There were none now to swing; rather the censers were busy before other high priests. He resented all this bitterly, just as a reduced gentleman resents the loss of luxuries, and came home of evenings to domestic joys, very moody and silent.

He thought very often of the hapless Violet. It seemed to him a very pretty romance, and it became sweet to him to dwell on it. The whole was a soft picture to look back to, and he felt deeply and sorrowfully, as he thought of her sad end. Yet the feeling was not ungrateful. It was a sort of pet flower-garden, into which he retired at times to walk. And he thought very, very often of the splendid flashing sister, and their dramatic night outside the café, and of the curious strange impression he seemed to make upon her. He felt a sort of restless wish to meet her again, and know more of those soft details which almost fell into the shape of a dream. He made many inquiries, but could not find her out. He had no clue. He asked those who might have known, but without success.

Suddenly one evening, on the steps of his club, he met Young Brett, whom he had not seen since an Eastport day, ever so long ago, and the day of an Eastport little party. But those times were now rolled up and huddled away in a corner like old canvas scenery.

Young Brett coloured up, gave him a blunt nod, and was passing on. Fermor stopped him. He

was quick enough to see this feeling, and was amused; Brett was only a child.

"I am so glad, Brett," said Fernor, putting his arm in the boy's. "Come back in here, I want to talk to you."

The other stood irresolute.

"I have to go—" he said at length. "The fact is, Fernor—"

Fernor was, luckily, in a good humour that evening. "The fact is," he said, "you are crusty to-night, and not so glad to see an old friend as you ought to be. Come. I am going your way, whatever way it is. There."

Young Brett was no match for handling of this sort. "Now," said Fernor, after they had walked a few moments, "what is the matter? What have I done to you? Have I not always tried to be kind to you—done everything I could in my small way?"

"Oh yes, yes," said Young Brett, a little ashamed; "but—but—O Fernor, how *could* you do that—it was dreadful. Such misery, such ruin! If indeed it had been to me, how glad I should have been. But that poor sweet innocent girl. It killed her, Fernor, it did indeed, as much as if you had poisoned her or stabbed her."

Fernor was silent a moment. Something like shame was in his cheeks. Yet there was something in this honest young creature he could not be angry with. "Brett," he said, in a low voice, "you have been hearing these stories. I was very sorry. I *could* not help it. How was I to know? Even her sister, who is the best judge, whom I saw in Paris the other day, she does not believe that idle history."

"Pauline!" said Young Brett, starting; "you met her?"

"To be sure," said Fernor, confidently. "Ask her about it if you like—we had coffee together on the Boulevards. Is she at Eastport still?"

Young Brett—relieved infinitely, and even delighted, to find that his friend was in some sort a true man (for so he now found him, from his faith in anything Miss Manuel did)—became eagerly communicative and told all that he knew, and left Fernor with Miss Manuel's address in Alfred-place, and many other particulars.

Fernor came home pleased with himself, and very gay. The nuptial stage moon was still shining, and the new husband and new wife wore their theatrical dresses and properties for each other's sake. But on this day young Mrs. Fernor had come home sadly troubled and distressed. She had two griefs: a deep and intricate deception practised on herself, and the image of a poor soft girl, who had withered away unto death.

She had a little corner or closet of romance into which she retired, and found pleasure in painting up a dreadful picture of desertion, and miserable blight. Not but that this brought with it a sense of conquest for herself; but there was also present a dread sense of *disquiet*. For already had the glorious sun in whose light

she basked sent forth some cold chilling rays, which made her shrink away in a sort of alarm.

By another week—being left a good deal alone—with a vague curiosity to know more of the bright Miss Manuel, and that curious story in which her husband had played such a part, Fernor came to her about noon, and asked would she go for him into the City, and do some small commission? He had West-end business of his own to attend to. For, though he had now no known profession, there was a sort of fiction accepted in the house of his going out each day for business, and of his coming home to dinner after business was done. Would she oblige him in this? said Captain Fernor, ceremoniously, for the stage moon was still shining, and the pantomime running. She was delighted. It fitted in very nicely, and she set out that afternoon with her maid, in a cab.

She had some little commission in some City shop, which was not readily found, and a sort of rude Siberian cabman (with a gaunt angular horse, whose legs swung like a pendulum in a slow trot) had made a low grumbling protest at each fresh direction. When, finally, he was bidden from the heart of the City to make straight for Alfred-place, at Brompton, he began to dwell with savage irony on the advantages of having "a 'os of hiron," and to hint at young Mrs. Fernor's "calling 'erself a lady," which she had not done, though perhaps considering the title implied. Taking a kind of short cut, the Siberian cabman got into a network of slums and narrow streets, devoted to ancient smelling fishes, and meat perhaps as old, and, to the general furnishing of a farder, mostly in a state of decay. Where, too, were some old book-stalls and some curiosity shops. And here, while turning a corner, the pendulum limbs of the cab-horse slipped from beneath him, and he was on the stones—himself as rough and as angular as a heap of stone.

In an instant there was a crowd; a crowd that came from behind the ancient meats and ancient fishes, and out of dark places yet further behind, just like brigands stopping a diligence. The two women inside, long since in trepidation at these strange regions, were now filled with terror, especially when the Siberian, instead of striving to raise his beast, came straight to the window, and began to assail them publicly as the authors of the misfortune. This was "wot it was come to," he said, still maintaining the irony. He hoped they liked it, and "was proud of their work."

"Let us out! let us out! Do, please," said young Mrs. Fernor, as the ring of faces drew closer to listen.

The Siberian put his hands in his pockets. "You want to see it, do ye? Nice ladies, ugh! Now," he said, suddenly growing savage, "wot are ye going to do? Come?"

"O, this is dreadful!" said Mrs. Fernor. "Help us, do. Do please let us out. Here is money."

They had only a few shillings. At the other side, where the glass was up, raw unshaved faces were pressed against it, looking in. There was much merriment and great curiosity abroad as to the result of this pleasant scene.

"Do you suppose," the Siberian added, with a loud bang on the door that made the whole cab clatter, "do you suppose that you're to go about all day a killin' orses on honest men, with a drive here, and a drive there, and then not pay for your whistle? I tell you wot—"

"We are ladies; indeed we are. Here is our address, and Captain Fernor—"

The Siberian laughed. "I want no captings. I want my money, and I want my orse. And I tell you, you don't go till I gets one or the other. Ain't it a shame," he added, turning to the crowd, "for people as dresses as ladies, and—"

In utter despair, young Mrs. Fernor had been looking across the wild faces, and beyond the wild faces. Suddenly, she saw a tall gentleman—a European, as it were, among the Indians—picking a way round the outskirts of the crowd. In an instant she had called to him. "O, sir, sir! Do come here! Help us! do, please."

The tall gentleman stopped a second, listened, then shrugged his shoulders, and was passing on. That stopping showed Mrs. Fernor his face, and the "gauntly handsome" face and the trailing moustache.

"O, Mr. Romaine," she said, in a lower voice. "Do come to me!"

Slowly Mr. Romaine swung his way through them. The crowd was knocked aside heavily, as though his elbows had been the corners of massive furniture. He was at the window in a moment, confronting the Siberian, on whom he looked down a head taller.

Young Mrs. Fernor, in some confusion, was beginning her story, when he stopped her. "Afterwards, if you like," he said. (Cab, cabman, and horse, in fact, narrated the whole thing much more shortly.) "Now you had better get out." He took hold of the handle of the door.

"Come, now. I say—" said the Siberian.

Mr. Romaine let it go at once. "Well, open it yourself, said he. "It will save my gloves. And look sharp."

The Siberian was a little staggered. "And who's to pay for the 'os and the damage? This won't do, I say," he said, coming in front of the door.

"Stand back, please," said Mr. Romaine, gently, at the same time calmly pressing his elbow on him. It was like the corner of a chest of drawers. "There—thank you! That will do. You should keep these handles a little freer—oil is not so dear. Take care," he said, in a low warning voice, to him. "You will get into mischief by interfering with me. Stand away! I once killed an Indian with a blow of this fist. I did; on my word. There's my card; I have got yours. I shall recollect the number. Here, my

friend" (to a smart ostler-looking man), "get this horse on his legs again. He is only shaken. There" (and he put something into the ostler's hands). "And you help too" (to a parcels boy, whose hand he also visited). "Here" (to the Siberian), "go to the next public with that. Wine makes the heart of man glad—or spirits. Now, Mrs. Fernor, take my arm. I know a short cut out of this place."

He led her away without further protest or obstruction. He was indeed a hero—a quiet, calm, grand hero. With so slight an exertion of power, what might he not accomplish if the occasion required! Women always overflow with gratitude to preservers of this sort—even to those who have saved them from a driver.

Civilised Europe was only a street away after all. Better still, here was a stand of cabs. Then Mrs. Fernor recovered herself, and began to discourse in coherent gratitude.

"Good gracious!" said he, "it's nothing. I heard a lady calling from a cab-window, and I came. Do what we will, we can't make a romance out of it. Now, here is a cab. I suppose I can go now?"

"O, thank you!" said young Mrs. Fernor, still overflowing with gratitude. "I don't know what to say, I am sure; how to thank you for such a service, knowing you so little, too."

"As for that," said he, "I may, without rudeness, relieve your mind. If it had been a washer-woman in her cart, whom I had never seen in my life, I should have done the same. It is really nothing," he said, smiling. "You make too much of it. Here is a cab. Could you spare me now? I really have an appointment."

"O, I am sure," said young Mrs. Fernor, "if we could leave you anywhere, I am sure—"

"I assure you I like to walk, unless," he added, smiling a little contemptuously, "you still think yourself in danger. I assure you this driver looks moral and respectable. Don't be afraid."

A little mortified, she got in, and she saw Mr. Romaine hurry away, apparently glad to be free. The maid pronounced him "a short" gentleman—that is, as regards manner.

Fernor was a long time out, and came home late—with the drum hoisted, as it were. She was not skilled in reading those meteorological signals, and flew at him eagerly with a full narrative of her adventures. It was such an escape—such a rescue—and such a rescuer. But Fernor was chafing. He had called twice at a House, and had not been admitted, though he had seen a bishop's carriage drive up, and finely turned ebony limbs go down its steps, and up other steps into the House. It was an insult, and not a mistake.

Young Mrs. Fernor's eyes were sparkling as she dwelt on the details of her story. "And would you believe it, Charles, he no more seemed to mind what he had done, than if he had walked across this room."

"Well, I take it all for granted," said her husband, getting up suddenly. "I have heard it

three times over now. A cab horse fell down, and a gentleman called another cab for you."

Young Mrs. Fermor coloured.

A cold fog or Scotch mist had covered up the stage moon. Now she saw the drum hoisted—and, wounded, withdrew her little narrative.

"Can he be getting *tired* of me already," she thought, a little bitterly. "How cold and cruel he can be." She had a dismal evening before her. The personal worship, the little censers that swung delicate little compliments, and the pretty sweet-smelling vapours of Roger le Garçon had been tumbled away into a corner. They were tarnished; they were old plate now.

A note was brought in. She took it, wondering who was to write her notes. She turned to the signature, and found it signed "Pauline Manuel." As Pauline's face flashed and glittered, so there was something of the same light in these written words, something in the invitation they gave. She had been expecting her, she said. She wished to see her so much, to talk over a hundred matters. "I am alone," said Pauline, "and have a hundred other things I want to keep out of my thoughts. You owe me a debt—you should be generous. *Your husband kindly called twice to-day*, but half by a mistake, half out of intention, was not admitted. I can know *you*, even like you—but him not so much; at least, not for a long time. You will understand this. Come to me to-morrow."

Colour flushed her cheeks. "So *this* is what he is busy with," she said; "carrying on a plot, a mystery. Oh, I am very miserable, very unhappy."

Fermor came in precisely at this unlucky moment. He saw her tell-tale cheeks. He was intolerant, and did not relish any one being out of humour but himself. "What," he said, "not blown over yet? Is it possible that you are displeased because I did not enter into your cab adventure? Good gracious! Come, now, you won't be so unreasonable." There was an air of sarcastic good humour in his tone, which was a little disagreeable.

Young Mrs. Fermor looked at him trembling. Her round red lips were quivering. She was thinking of all her "wrongs" accumulating since the Paris night.

But she answered calmly: "You might reduce every action to that shape, if we looked at it in that sort of light."

Fermor did not like being argued with, so he said, sharply, "And let me tell you, my dear child, now that you are come to live in London, that this making a nine days' wonder out of every cab you take, and of every man you pick up out of the street, will lead you into all sorts of embarrassments. Seriously, we should get rid of our little Eastport simplicity, my dear."

Her lips shaped themselves into deep reproach. "How cold, how unkind you are," they seemed to say. Fermor heard these words as much as if they had been spoken. "Go to your father," he said, "and tell *him* about the cab. I have busi-

ness now, my dear,—letters. I have been worried all day. The story will amuse him."

Young Mrs. Fermor, with her round soft cheeks full of colour, was sensitive, and a little quick of temper. Over the pantomime moon a cloud had suddenly spread itself. The soft cheeks were glowing and flaming. "How cold and unkind," she said, quickly. "I did not expect this from you. If papa knew this—"

Now indeed the colour came to Fermor's cheeks. "Don't say that," he answered, with a trembling voice; "never speak in that way to me, if you wish us to live quietly together. I shall not be intimidated by *his* name. No, I am not come to *that*; no," continued he, walking up and down, "though people may say I have sold myself 'into genteel slavery.'"

Now was the fitting time for opening the hysterical flood-gates. Down burst the torrent of tears, carrying with it, like stones, ejaculations of cruelty and unkindness. "Indeed, I might have expected this," she said. "I was warned in time. And when *she*, poor thing, was treated in *that* way—"

"She! Who?" said Fermor, stopping short in his walk, and turning pale.

"I know it," said young Mrs. Fermor. "It was kept very secret; but I have heard it all. Perhaps it will be *my* fate one of these days. God help me. It was not suitable that I should know it. I was kept in the dark, it seems—until—until the slavery—the genteel slavery was accomplished. Yes, I know the whole, though you had *reasons* for not telling me—what the poor girl, now in her grave, who, *I* was told, was married and happy—"

"Never, never!" said Fermor, cagerly. "I did not indeed. I could not tell such a falsehood." And indeed, to do him justice, he had never said so. "But what is the meaning of this? This is simply absurd. Do let us have no vulgar matrimonial quarrels—not *as yet*, at least," he added, with a forced smile. He tried thus to sweep away the subject into a corner. But unhappily—to use the odious language of the ring—here was first blood. Very soon the pantomime, with its stage moon, would be withdrawn. The "run" was nearly over.

It was of course patched up; both shrank a little from this "vulgar quarrelling." They had not yet learned to cast down the idols, or, at least, to be careless about casting them down.

CHAPTER VIII. AT A BROUGHAM WINDOW.

THE Irrefragable Insurance Company, Limited, had a new home in the West-end, a very narrow strip of front, that looked like the "console" of a mahogany sideboard, or like the edge of a thin slice of bride-cake. The small patch of ground upon which it stood would not have furnished room—by way of burial—for many of the "Lives" the office insured; yet, if it had been floored with golden sovereigns instead of encaustic tiles, it would not have represented all its cost. It was doing a thriving business,

chiefly from an unquestioned readiness in accepting anything that came loosely under the designation of a Life (even though the value lay rather in the direction of a Death), and from a profession, not quite so unquestioned, of paying all claims with a readiness that was almost "soft."

In these days a brougham drove up to the door of the Irrefragable—a brougham, no doubt, containing a Life. The Life was a Lady Life. It came in, and the mahogany doors swung to behind it—as it were the lid of a box, shutting down firmly on the Life. The greatness of the business seemed to be revealed in its mahogany, and the Lady Life was reflected in panelling and partitions forward, and from a monster solid counter (that would have dined giants, and borne the weight of their elbows after dinner) upwards.

The Lady Life was a flashing Life, bright, dazzling, and handsomely dressed. The faces of many clerks converged to her with admiration. Mr. Speedy, manager and actuary, imprisoned all day in a little compartment that looked like a mahogany match-box, looked out over the edge to the brilliant Lady Life. Mr. Speedy, who did showy calculations, and furnished the instructive examples out of "the Books of the Company," beginning, "A has insured in the year 1837 for one hundred pounds," reconnoitred the lady narrowly, for about every life that entered he did a little exercise to keep his mental hand in. "I know," said Mr. Speedy to himself; "handsome young wife, old husband, with Life utterly uninsurable. *That* won't do here, madam." He listened, as Pauline's soft clear voice travelled to him readily.

She wished to insure her own Life, only for a trifle, say two hundred pounds—say in favour of her brother. Could they oblige her with forms? Mr. Speedy, over the edge of his match-box, had seen the dark brougham—the spectre of the uninsurable octogenarian husband had happily faded out. Here was a case for extended connection. He came down softly out of his box with forms, and took the case out of the hands of the inferiors.

"You will find everything here," he said, collecting quite a little library of fat almanacks, coloured pictures of the "branchies" at Montreal, Dublin, &c. "We offer very advantageous terms. We ask no disagreeable questions, and give as little trouble as we can. I am sure you would not regret coming to us. In fact, if you were satisfied, and would kindly mention us to any of your friends——"

"I certainly shall," said Pauline. "In fact, I have come to you chiefly because a gentleman that I know has been with you—Major Carter."

Mr. Speedy's brow contracted. "Ah! A claim *that* is! The most unfortunate transaction we have had yet. Seven thousand pounds, and only two years' premium paid! We were advised to resist; but, as we are a young institution, we thought it better to avoid the—scandal," said Mr. Speedy, smiling. "It was the fault of our medical adviser, who accepted the lady's Life too hastily."

"Mrs. Carter?" said Pauline.

"Yes," said Mr. Speedy. "But we are prepared cheerfully to make any sacrifice—*any* sacrifice to keep up the irrefragable character of our corporation. As we have dealt with Major Carter openly, fairly, and honourably, so, if you honour us, madam——"

"You will pay my heirs," said Pauline, smiling, "as readily as you did Major Carter?"

"The Board has not paid yet," said Mr. Speedy. "By the terms of our charter, we can keep the policy money nine months. But what is that? Fairness and honesty before everything."

Pauline took away her pictures and thick almanacks into her brougham.

Mr. Speedy retired into his match-box, but looked out long over its edge after the bright and fashionable lady who had visited him. He told Mrs. Speedy at dinner of the interview he had had with a very "high" person indeed at the office, and he hinted that by his tact and management he had secured that "interest" for the office. He did not know, however, that the "high" lady had thrown herself back in her brougham with a weary air, and had flung down his papers with a sort of disgust. "How I loathe—how I detest myself," she said, "for these meannesses. I am ashamed to hold up my head. But what can I do? Women have no other strength. Trickery and cunning and meanness—this must serve us in the room of brute force. Is my life to become an organised hypocrisy? O, Violet!"

She was coming to the Park. Her face became bright again. She drew herself forward, and looked out proudly from the window. A few people were waiting half way at the crossing to let a string of carriages go by. To her astonishment, she saw young Mrs. Fernor and her maid among these. In an instant she had the glass down, and was calling to her.

The young wife, unhappy and tossed about by her new bitter troubles, had determined to forswear her society. She shrank even from the name. But now, with Pauline present, it seemed altogether different. She felt herself a mere child before that brilliant woman of the world. There was an influence in her—an absorbing glance—which she could not resist. Miss Manuel bade her send home her maid, and get in. She must come and drive with her, and see the company in the Park. Mrs. Fernor made a faint protest, and put forward her dress, but she was powerless in *those* hands. There was a seduction about Pauline as she made a place for her beside herself, which, for the moment, she did not wish to resist.

She had never yet seen this shape of Vanity Fair—the procession of people of quality moving along like a bright Coventry ribbon. Her lord, Fernor, had always dismissed it as childish, and as a childish taste. Had not *he* seen it over and over again, until he was literally sick of the business? Now it quite dazzled her—the noble

horses, and the knights, and the ladies of the knights, and the wealth that shone with a raveness and vulgarity, and the nobility of birth, that glowed with a rich but subdued quietude. She was delighted with this wonderful show, for she was a rustic.

Even the loungers—who came to stare and perhaps remained to talk—attracted her. She asked about them—about everybody. Pauline was charming—told her all things. “I like you to ask me everything,” she said, “in that natural way. I want you to consult me, and in time to like me, if you *can*.”

“Ah!” said young Mrs. Fermor, stooping forward a little eagerly, and in some confusion, “is not that—yes, I am sure it is——”

“How well you know,” said Pauline, looking at her with a strange quick look. “You are quite right. We shall call him over. Mr. Romaine!”

“No, no! indeed, no,” said Mrs. Fermor, hurriedly; “not while I am with you.”

“Nonsense!” said Pauline, smiling. “I know what you are thinking of. You are afraid of him.”

Mr. Romaine, in pale gloves, was at her window. Mrs. Fermor saw the look of impatience on his face, as she came into view. “I am always to be in his way,” she thought. He nodded slightly to her.

“*You* come to the show,” he said, “Miss Manuel. Of course you do. And yet I know what you think of the whole business. I am astonished, you that talk so.”

“Never mind that now,” she said. “You see my friend Mrs. Fermor here?”

“I do,” he said, looking down to beat his trousers with his cane; “that is, I should say I have the pleasure.”

“Mr. Romaine was so kind to me the other day,” said Mrs. Fermor, warmly. “And I am afraid I never thanked him sufficiently for——”

“O,” said he, “are we never to be out of that cab! Heaven preserve us! do let us leave it where we left it. I declare—and think me candid, but not rude, please—I am inclined never to go to the assistance of any one in that way again.”

Pauline looked from one to the other. Mrs. Fermor showed her confusion and mortification. “Because you,” she said, quickly and warmly, “are above all these forms, there is no reason why *we* should be. I assure you it is more from respect to ourselves that we say these things. I should consider myself quite rustic if I passed it over. You must make allowance; you should, indeed.”

This was all spoken very hastily, and with a voice that almost trembled. She was a little quick of temper. He looked at her with really blank astonishment. Pauline clapped her hands.

“Exceedingly good,” she said. “There, that will do for *you*,” and she pressed Mrs. Fermor’s arm under her shawl with encouragement.

“Charming, my dear,” she whispered; “a good lesson. Now, Mr. Romaine, after that, tell us news, wicked news, if you have any. There’s old Lady Canonbury rolling by and swinging like Mahomet’s coffin. Look, dear; and she is worth looking at, for that spotted and fiery face can be set off with a hundred thousand pounds’ worth of diamonds.”

But Mrs. Fermor’s face was glowing and flushing still, and she was biting her plum-coloured lips with vexation, at the sharp attack of which she had been the subject. These pretty little emotions were as yet a sort of awkward squad, to be trained and drilled into good soldiers by-and-by.

“What about Miss Loreley’s match?” cried Pauline. “Come, we wait? Begin.”

“Look at *her*,” he said, suddenly, “how angry she is! She could eat me now—make a pin-cushion of me—all because I won’t be overloaded with thanks. How good!” His eyes were fixed upon her as if she was some show or exhibition. Mrs. Fermor only flushed the more.

“No, indeed,” she said, “I don’t care in the least. You quite mistake. But I think you need not have been so excited about my little thanks.”

“Excited!” he said, smiling. “Who here is excited? I am not. I only speak for myself.”

“It’s *not* about that, then?” said Mrs. Fermor.

“What isn’t about that, then?” he said, still amused. “I protest I don’t follow.”

Still really angry, she would not answer, but looked out of the window.

“I won’t have this,” said Pauline. “You must go away; you are creating a disturbance. The savage is breaking out. If you really want a fight, you may have it in my house, with decency, at the usual hour. There, go.” And she drew up the glass and bade the coachman drive home.

“O,” said Mrs. Fermor, suddenly, “I don’t know what you will think of me. I am quite ashamed of myself, and of such temper.”

Miss Manuel laughed. “It was capital,” she said. “You have done him a world of good. I, who am not in *much* terror of him, could not have said it. Ah! I see you are clever.”

“No, indeed,” said Mrs. Fermor. “Charles often tells me I am a child still.”

At that name Miss Manuel started a little. “Some men would have us children always. Our poor Violet would have been a child always. Sometimes, looking at you as I do now, it reminds me of her—something in the tone, something in the manner. Ah, poor Violet!”

Mrs. Fermor saw the deep eyes glistening. She was quick and impulsive in all emotions. She put her hand affectionately on Miss Manuel’s arm.

“Indeed, I feel for you,” she said, “and all about that. Indeed I do. It makes me miserable at times to think of it. Though I had never seen her, somehow I felt as if it had been for my *own*

sister. And for *you*, too," she added, "who loved her so dearly."

Pauline drew away from her suddenly, with a startled look, and began to talk rapidly. "Yes, I know," she said; "a sad story. A sensation incident they would call it now," she added, with a smile, but a very mournful smile.

They were at Alfred-place, and had the unfailing tea. "We shall have a quiet talk together," said Miss Manuel; "you on that sofa, I on this. The mob won't be here for an hour to come. This will be delightful. Talking of poor Romaine, there is something to be said for him now. He is scarcely an accountable being. You would hardly guess that he is in a very wild state of mind."

Mrs. Fermor looked curious.

"Yes," said Pauline, "I could tell you a long history about *that*. There was a girl he fancied, and who, he tells me, fancied him. As you know, that is good authority; but no matter. These rough savages, as you can fancy, when they *do* love, love like a hurricane—like a storm. Well, she has just married—a good match, too."

Really interested, and not without a little compunction, Mrs. Fermor waited for more. Women delight in these little dramas.

"So, after all," said Miss Manuel, "we should not be very hard on him. You can understand what a struggle is going on. He wants to be good, and to do the right thing, and we should help him, if we can. He thinks the newly married pair are to be away for the winter, in Rome; but the worst is, I know that they are to be here. Their plans have been changed. So I say we must help him, and be indulgent. Don't you think so?"

At this moment the tall figure which they were to help, came swinging in. "I knew we should have you," said Miss Manuel, half scornfully. "You may sit down, however."

Mr. Romaine dropped impulsively into his low chair. "I told you I was coming," he said. "When I get into the habit of a thing, I must go on, even if I am not in the humour. So—I had to come."

"Polite," said Miss Manuel. "Tea?"

"No," he answered, bluntly; "I don't care for that. Once I have a sharp thing said to me," he said, fixing his eyes directly on Mrs. Fermor, "it puts me out for everything, even for that sort of wash."

Mrs. Fermor coloured at this allusion, which she understood perfectly.

"I never meant, I am sure," she said, casting down her eyes. "I thought you——"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Mr. Romaine, as if he was in the hunting-field. "There's human nature! We apply everything to ourselves. Alas! we ourselves are always the first object in our thoughts."

Another sort of colour was hurrying to Mrs. Fermor's cheeks at this fresh outrage, when he added, slowly:

"Not but that, in the present case, you were right. I *was* alluding to you."

Again, in fresh confusion, Mrs. Fermor, vexed with him, with the situation, with everybody, but mostly with herself, hurriedly rose to go. He lifted himself hastily.

"Going home?" he said, "thinking me, of course, a Honolulu islander. Well, I can't help it; I can't change my spots. But I can do this—beg pardon. Forgive. I don't mean all I say or do."

Mrs. Fermor looked up at him with more confidence, and a smile. She was hopelessly mortified at these ups and downs, but gave him her hand. Pauline came out with her, and kissed her. "You are a wonderful creature," she said; "you amaze me. I could not *dare* to go on in that way. I must see you again soon. You have promised me, mind."

As the young wife passed out, Miss Manuel, staying on the stairs and looking after her, dropped her hand on the banister, and stamped her foot with what seemed a sudden pain. "Poor innocent!" she said, "*is* she beginning to like me? How like to——" Then she turned sharply round, and walked back into the drawing-room.

"There," she said, half contemptuously, "you have found a sensible woman at last, on whom all your fine tragedy is lost! Now, is your mind at rest? What can repay you for the lost time?"

He began to pace the room, impatiently biting his monstache. He looked at her angrily. "So she defies me through you? Take care. That is not to be done to me."

THE U. S. SANITARY COMMISSION.

We have already given* some account of the Sanitary Commission which has saved to so large an extent the waste of disease and sickness in the United States army; but a fresh, full, and authentic record of its "Works and Purposes," published for its benefit, being now before us, we may draw therefrom a little further information. For in this matter, though the Americans learnt their lesson from an Englishwoman—from Miss Nightingale—they have applied her teaching on a scale, and with an energy, that makes their practice an example for the future in all European wars. It is something, too, to find in any way "the cause of humanity identified with the strength of armies." It was on the thirteenth of June, in the year 'sixty-one, that the Sanitary Commission, having its origin as we have already described, came into existence by the efficacy of the President's signature to the official warrant for its organisation as "A Commission of Inquiry and Advice, in respect of the Sanitary Interests of the United States Forces." It was to "direct its inquiries to the principles and practices connected with the inspection of recruits and enlisted men; the sanitary condition of the volunteers; to the means of pre-

* Vol. xi. p. 328.

serving and restoring the health, and of securing the general comfort and efficiency of troops; to the proper provision of cooks, nurses, and hospitals; and to other objects of like nature."

The members of the Commission sat in deliberation for three or four months after its constitution, during which time they not only laid broad foundations for its operations, but entered into a great variety of special inquiries and labours. The president and an associate secretary set off to study with their own eyes and with the practical question as it would lie before them among the troops gathering on the Ohio and Mississippi; other commissioners went to look at the state of the forces in the East; and before the army of the Potomac fought its first battle, a sound system of sanitary inspection was commenced. Already, by the month of July, the secretary was reporting, from results of direct inquiry, upon the wants of the armies in respect of encampments and camp drainage, malaria, water, tents, sunstroke, personal cleanliness, latrines, camp police, clothing, food, and cooks. Regimental officers were having new ideas of duty and responsibility drilled into them. The disasters at Bull Run, on the eighteenth and twenty-first of July, taught the North that it had no feeble enemy to fight. The people yielded volunteers, and looked to the Sanitary Commission for the safety of those young farmers, clerks, students, mechanics, lawyers, doctors, who had gone out of so many families from ways of peace into the battle-field. Partly for this reason, and for many another natural reason testifying to the soul of good that is in things evil, the American people has undoubtedly backed its sanitary commission very heartily indeed, with good will and substantial aid. In a single day, after Bull Run, a large store-room in the Treasury Building at Washington was crammed with offerings from women for use of the wounded soldiers. So began the work of relief that formed thenceforth an important addition to the duties of the Commission.

Though opposed at first by military martinets, even these, or most of them, saw their mistake, and found important allies in the labourers, who, not only by formal resolution stated that "the first sanitary law in camp and among soldiers is military discipline," but, for the sake of the health, comfort, and morality of the volunteers, in other resolutions "implored" that "the most thorough system of military discipline be carried out with the officers and men of the volunteer force," and declared that "all the great defects, whether, in the commissariat, or in the police of camps, are radically due to the absence of officers from their posts, and to the laxity of discipline to which they are themselves accustomed. The Commission resolved, also, "that the soldiers themselves, in their painful experience of want of leaders and protectors, would heartily welcome a rigid discipline exerted over their officers and themselves." In fact, no military martinet can be more anxious than a sanitary commissioner, who cares for the health

and general well-being of his army, to keep everybody well up to his duty, and lay a whip on that horse in the team which shirks his fair share of the pulling.

Money flowed in, and the Commission was soon able to humanise the military hospitals by the addition of comforts. The first order was for water-beds, and the next for a hundred small tables for writing in bed, a hundred wire cradles for protecting wounded limbs, thirty boxes of dominoes, and, thirty chess-boards. Great attention was, at the same time, being paid to the construction of hospitals, the state of particular hospitals being investigated, and plans and details prepared for the required improvements. We have already told of the establishment of the Soldiers' Rest at Washington, for shelter of the sick and needy, and of similar "rests" and "homes" elsewhere established for use of the wayworn volunteer. Two thousand three hundred soldiers are helped in them daily; men gone astray, or by chance otherwise uncared for, or discharged men waiting for their pay. Three days is the average length of time for which a man takes shelter in such a Soldiers' Rest or Home. Schedules of inquiry, too, were issued for systematic camp inspections, four hundred of them were returned before the end of the year, and the general secretary presented his own careful deductions from the returns of two hundred regiments whose sanitary history and wants had been specially studied and reported during the months of September and October. So well was all such knowledge turned to account, that in the midst of a severe campaign one might find a full regiment with only four men sick in general and regimental hospitals—a regiment that never neglected its camp police and its camp-cooking, even when bivouacking. Two men in every company of this regiment had early been taught the art of preparing the army rations.

While the first mass of the soldiers was being thus leavened with the knowledge of things useful to their health, the rigour of the war produced fresh calls of men by the half million; and by all the laws of licensed bungling, the Sanitary Commission had a right to excuse itself as over-taxed and to break down, but it did not. It had a staff of fourteen well-qualified physicians, each with a defined portion of the army under his observation. Six other gentlemen, with special acquirements, were engaged on special duties. And of this score of labourers several had withdrawn from well-paid work to devote themselves for fewer dollars to work only in the noblest sense more profitable. Much importance is ascribed to the indefinable influence of sanitary information, given unobtrusively, upon the mind and conduct of the regimental officers. A sensible officer, who cared for the health of his men, and had results to show, also excited emulation in his neighbours, and a wholesome regiment stationed near an ill-conditioned one would make the contrast so apparent as to set reform on foot where it was wanted. In a hundred

camps, as first inspected, only five were in admirable order; forty-five were fairly clean and wholesome; twenty-six were "negligent and slovenly;" and twenty-four were "decidedly bad, filthy, and dangerous." Active diffusion of better knowledge produced such a change that faults of unwholesomeness which had been thought unworthy the attention of regimental officers, came to be considered disgraceful, and the number of camps in which officers and men took pride in maintaining an exact and severe regard to wholesomeness increased rapidly. When Congress began to discuss the medical and sanitary care of the army, it had the Commission to look to for all needful reports, and required its aid in the preparation of the new Medical Act, which ordered the appointment of a special corps of sanitary inspectors from the staff of regular and volunteer surgeons, increased for the army the number of regular and assistant surgeons, enlarged the corps of medical cadets that yielded dressers to the hospitals, and removed all the red tape by which hands could be tied when they should bring instant help, and whereby the supply of any want could be delayed for a minute in obedience to mere routine. The same act appointed as surgeon-general the most fit person that could be found, without any regard to seniority. Dr. William A. Hammond was a scholar in his art, and a distinguished physiologist, who, at the outbreak of the war, had relinquished a professorship to take his old place as an assistant-surgeon upon the army medical staff. His published official reports of inspection in hospitals and camps "had displayed a capacity to grasp with peculiar power all those practical questions of military hygiene with which the medical department is concerned," and he had shown the practical knowledge as well as the tact necessary in the chief director of a great reform, by which the lives of tens of thousands might be saved. He, therefore, though comparatively a young man, was boldly placed at the head of the Medical Bureau. The department, organised under his care, and his new staff of sanitary inspectors, should have relieved the Sanitary Commission of some of the costly work done by it with means supplied in voluntary contributions from the people. But the new machinery was not in full work till the extension of the war, and the quadrupled demand on every resource for the care of sick and wounded, made the abatement in any kind of work or effort by the Sanitary Commission quite impossible. There were armies up the Pamunkey and in New Orleans, under conditions very adverse to their health, and the constant sickness-rate of the Federal army was then one-seventh of the total force. Here is part of a letter from a hospital ship at Cincinnati, written after receipt of two hundred and fifty boxes and barrels from the supply department of the Sanitary Commission: "Most of the sick are greatly debilitated, and are much more in want of stimulants and nourishing appetising food than any kind of medication. Most diseases

here assume a typhoid type, and more than half of the severely sick have typhoid fever. Scurvy is beginning to make its appearance among our troops, and the health of all is impaired by their long-continued deprivation of fresh meats, fruits, and vegetables. I cannot describe, nor can you fully imagine, how great blessings the eggs, the butter, the oranges, the lemons, the thousand cases of fruit, the sauer-kraut, the pickles, the ice, the potatoes, the ale, the wine, and other articles of equal value, which composed your generous gift, will be to these poor, feeble, feverish, and almost famished fellows, now lying in the hospital at Hamburg Landing. . . . On Sunday religious services were performed, and, as cleanliness is next to godliness, our convalescents were tempted to self-purification by the offer of a pair of socks to every one who would wash his feet; to those who would perform general ablution, clean shirts and drawers. In this way, with little trouble to ourselves, we soon brought our whole cargo of living freight into a more comfortable and presentable condition."

And let all honour be given for his labour in the Sanitary Commission, of which he might almost be called the heart and soul, to Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted, who acted for the first couple of years as its general secretary and was in great part, we believe, its founder. Mr. Olmsted was, before the war, well known in England for the valuable information he obtained by personal research, and published in his account of Journeys and Explorations in the Cotton States. See in what spirit he afterwards animated his fellow-labourers for the health of the armies of the United States. "The governing purpose of the organisation," he wrote to his associate secretary at the West, "is to avoid delay and circumlocution, to the end of accomplishing efficiency and directness of action. All practicable checks and methods consistent with and subsidiary to this are to be observed. None are to be cared for which assuredly interfere with it. . . . When the money gives out, we are to scuffle and go down—till then, *do our work thoroughly.*"

To those characteristics of the relief system which we described in our former account of this admirable organisation, we must add a word of the Hospital Directory, with offices in different towns, which are supplied with recent and accurate information concerning every patient in the military hospitals. The sole purpose of this bureau is to enable friends at home to obtain information readily as to the life or death, health, sickness, and whereabouts of any soldier in the Northern armies. Thus inquiry is made by his mother or wife at the Washington Directory for information respecting Private John Jones, Co. C. 64th Regiment, New York Volunteers. The answer comes, taking one actual answer as a sample, in this form: "John Jones, Co. C. 64th Regiment, New York Volunteers, was admitted to U. S. General Hospital, Camp A., Frederick, Maryland, Nov. 26th, 1862, transferred to Camden-street Hospital, Balti-

more, May 17th, 1863. On the 17th of July following, he was detached to the 1st Battalion Invalid Corps, and is now on duty at Jamaica, Long Island, New York." Each state has its own Directory, and there are two hundred thousand names now on the books of Washington alone. Mr. Bowne, the Chief of the Directory Bureau, reporting at the end of last year upon nine thousand two hundred and three answers to anxious questions, thus tells of the sort of work they represent. "Of the many scenes witnessed in the bureau, I can only mention a few, without attempting a description. A mother has not heard anything of her son since the last battle; she hopes he is safe, but would like to be assured—there is no escape—she must be told that he has fallen upon the 'Federal altar'; an agony of tears bursts forth which seems as if it would never cease; another, less excitable, does not tire of telling 'how good a boy he was.' 'No mother had such a son as he,' sobs a third. A father presents himself—a strong man and yet young in years—to receive the same announcement, and sinks with audible grief into a chair; another, with pale face and tremulous voice, anxious to know, yet dreading to hear, is told that his boy is in the hospital a short distance off; he grasps the hand with both of his, while tears run down his cheek, and without uttering another word he leaves the room. 'It is very hard, my friend,' was said to one overcome with grief, 'but you are not alone.' 'I know it, sir,' was the reply, 'but he was the only one I had.' An intelligent looking woman says, with almost breathless voice, 'I want to find my husband; I have not heard from him for several months. I have written to the officers of his regiment, but do not get any reply; can you tell me where he is?' 'Will you please to give me his name and the number of his regiment?' She does that, and is told, 'You will find him at Lincoln Hospital; the city cars pass near the building, and the conductor will point it out to you.' A momentary shade of incredulity is followed by a look of grateful emotion, and in an instant she is in the street. Thus, says the chief of the bureau, "the varied scene goes on. One inquirer leaves the room grateful, buoyant, and happy, to be followed by another, equally grateful, who will 'tread softly' the remainder of his days, for the 'light of his dwelling has gone out.' As each departs, another figure is added to the list of 'inquiries and answers,' and the seemingly monotonous work of the bureau is resumed."

Among other good works of the Sanitary Commission, is the invention and use of a railway ambulance or carriage for the wounded. A dozen or more of such ambulances are in constant use upon every railway communicating with armies or hospitals. They are carefully ventilated carriages, fitted with elastic beds and invalid chairs, shaded lights, speaking tubes for communication between nurses and surgeons, dispensary stores of warm clothing, concentrated food, water supply and a kitchen, six feet by three, with water tank, wash basin, sink, cup-

boards for stores and dishes, and two large lamps heating copper boilers, for the quick and careful preparation of soup, tea, and so forth. These carriages are specially protected by springs to their buffers, against jars in stopping and starting; and by nine such carriages a surgeon in charge of them reports that he has removed more than twenty thousand patients, with the loss only of one man. That man's case was hopeless, and he was removed, against medical advice, in deference to his own earnest desire to "die at home." Another contrivance is of "refrigerating cars," for the daily transit to Washington of supplies of fresh provisions from the markets of Philadelphia, where the whole state is a garden.

Many interesting facts may be told in illustration of the great energy shown under the direction of the U. S. Sanitary Commission, in protecting the large Federal armies against scurvy. It was a Medical Inspector, Lieutenant-Colonel Frank H. Hamilton, who, in reporting to the Medical Bureau from the army in Tennessee, expressed the belief, now adopted as an axiom, that "one barrel of potatoes per annum is to the government equal to one man." As the markets alone could not supply the necessary quantity of vegetables, it was necessary to appeal to the private farmers, and urge every one who had a patch of garden, to grow in it a few vegetables for the army. A cry was raised of "Potatoes and onions for the whole army." "Onion Leagues," it was said, should vie with "Union Leagues," in number and zeal of membership. M. Baudens, Medical Inspector of the French army in the Crimea, said, in one of his reports, that "a hundred thousand francs spent in fresh vegetables, is a saving of five hundred thousand francs in the expense of sending the sick to hospitals," thus a shilling's-worth of potatoes, onions, or cabbage, saves five shillings'-worth of sickness. The potatoes and onions, as less perishable than the cabbage, are more convenient for transport to distant armies.

It was Doctor H. A. Warriner who, writing from Vicksburg, pointed to a supply of fresh vegetables that had, by saving the strength of an army, "modified history." Wherever an army has been stationed long enough under conditions that allowed such an arrangement, the counsels of the Sanitary Commission lead to the establishment of vegetable gardens near the camp. Thus eighty acres of fertile land were turned into vegetable gardens—hospital gardens—in the neighbourhood of Murfreesboro' and Nashville. The Commission furnished seeds and garden tools, and many thousands of plants were bought in Louisville and Cincinnati. In buying for the army, when commissaries have found the markets exhausted, the Sanitary Commission has set its machinery to work, and drawn through its ramifications local gifts or sales of vegetables by the peck, bushel, or barrel, into a broad stream of supply flowing in on its own head-quarters for redistribution to the troops. Of the self-devotion with which the medical officers apply such stores to their right

use, an example is given in the case of a surgeon who suffered seriously from scurvy himself for want of some of the vegetables which he was conscientiously distributing to the enlisted men under his charge. He had banished scurvy from their tents, and it remained only among the officers. "When he was directed to use them for the officers also, as far as they needed them medicinally, he expressed surprise and gratitude both; for they supposed they were to be used sacredly for the enlisted men." This is something different to our ship-scurvy in trading vessels, a fiend of the fore-castle never seen in the officers' cabin.

The following appeal "to all boys and girls in the North," shows how the smallest contributions to the health of the army, though but a child's basket of blackberries gathered from the roadside, have been sought and applied to their right use: "Will your kind hearts and willing hands work for the soldier? You may ask, what can we do? You can work in your gardens and fields, plant and cultivate potatoes, tomatoes, cabbage, onions, &c. You can gather strawberries, raspberries, currants, and blackberries, and your mothers will can them. Your apples, peaches, pears, and plums can be cut and dried, and put in small bags, then these rich treasures of your gardens, fields, and orchards, the products of your patriotic industry, sent to the Soldiers' Aid Society, and thus to the U. S. Sanitary Commission, will reach the soldier, help him to get well, and cheer his heart."

The garden-making has its difficulties. Having got the ground and the ploughs, to get a chief quartermaster to spare teams for the ploughs was found last spring no easy task at Chaffinoga. The ploughs were at last drawn by convalescents from the sick among the horses, and driven by convalescents from among sick soldiers. A large vineyard, containing upwards of fourteen thousand Catawba vines, was made also to yield a hundred and thirty thousand pounds of grapes.

But after all that is done, wounds and sickness leave their lifelong scar on many thousands of the huge armies engaged in this absorbing struggle. A hundred thousand men broken in health, or maimed of limb, have been by this time thrown upon the country, and a question of great moment for the Sanitary Commission has been, how should the country deal with this large army of invalids? A committee of four was appointed last March, "to consider the subject of the organisation, location, and final establishment of National Sanitaria for disabled soldiers."

We add only three facts. The first is, that up to the fourth of March, this year, the Central Treasury of the Commission had been supported by voluntary contributions to the extent of one million one hundred and thirty-three thousand six hundred and twenty-eight dollars. Beyond this, the aggregate of the sums spent by the numerous branch and aid societies in purchase of stores, would amount to a yet larger sum. The second fact is, that the U. S. Sanitary

Commission has a staff of two hundred men, who receive on an average two dollars a day for labour by which they could usually earn five or ten times what they are content to take as bare support, while they are performing a high duty to their country. The twenty-one members of the Board all give their time and services gratuitously, and have refunded to them only a part of their travelling expenses in the service of the Commission. The third fact is, that as a result of all this zeal, though of the immense force engaged more than a hundred thousand men have fallen in the field or died in hospital, the average rate of mortality from sickness in the armies, is, in spite of the vastly increased difficulty of maintaining health, only a third of what it was among the United States volunteers in the Mexican war.

HIPPED IN HOXTON.

IN walking about certain districts of this great wilderness of brick and mortar, nothing strikes me so much, or puzzles me so much, as the vast number of first-class mansions London contains. Leaving Belgravia, the acknowledged head-quarters of wealth and magnificence, out of the question, go to Bayswater, Brixton, Paddington, Notting-hill, ay, even to modest Camden-town, you may wander for miles among houses of almost palatial dimensions. There is no end of such houses; and as you pass them, say about six in the evening, and catch a glimpse of their well-appointed kitchens, where servants are preparing elaborate dinners at blazing fires, and behold spacious dining-rooms and snowy damask and glittering plate, you will assuredly fall to wondering who the people are who occupy those grand houses, and above all, where their money comes from? In all the districts I have mentioned you may walk for hours among houses whose occupiers must spend at the very least a thousand a year; while many of them must expend five times that amount. Now, who are these people?—the thousands and tens of thousands who inhabit those fine houses, and drive their broughams and their carriages, and are clad in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day? They are too genteel for brass plates; but if you make inquiries at the greengrocer's in the back street, or at the public-house in the mews, or of the page-boy tripping along to order cream for the coffee, you will probably learn that Brown lives in one, Jones in another, Robinson in a third, Snooks in a fourth, and so on. They are people you never heard of before in your life, that no one ever heard of, or ever will hear of out of the narrow circle in which Brown, Jones, and Robinson move.

This annoys me sometimes, frets me, and makes me—not envious, for I would not exchange places with Brown or Jones for all the wealth of the Indies—but discontented.

Suppose I were to say that I am a person who *has* been heard of, that I have earned public fame and public honour, and that if I were to men-

tion my name here thousands would recognise me, and be able to tell who I am and what I have done. Suppose this, I say, and then imagine my reflections sometimes when I am walking home to my eight-roomed cottage in Hoxton through these magnificent squares and crescents tenanted by these nameless persons, every one of them sitting in an easy-chair drinking 'twenty port.

I don't say there is anything wrong about it; but now and then it strikes me as being rather odd and almost paradoxical. I have written the poem of the day, or painted the picture of the day, and here I am in my eight-roomed house at Hoxton, while Brown, who is the Lord knows who, and does the Lord knows what, resides in that first-class family mansion in Tyburnia. Let me write or paint for the next forty years as fast as ever I can, and as well as ever I can, and to the very best advantage, and I shall never be able to get beyond Brown. A legion of equally nameless Joneses and Robinsons will still be several stories above me.

Understand me, I am not repining, I am not discontented, I am very snug here in Hoxton. I have plenty in my pantry, plenty in my coal-cellar, a feather-bed—such a feather-bed! it was my grandmother's, and has been stuffed with the feathers of many generations of fowls, bred, reared, killed, and eaten in the family—and I have a bin of "'sixty" port, which is cheering nevertheless. Moreover I have tolerably good health. In fact, I have the capacity for enjoyment, and the means of enjoyment, and I do enjoy myself thoroughly. I am thankful every day of my life for the many mercies of Heaven, which I often think are far more than I deserve, or have any right to expect.

Still those nobodies in the roomy and desirable family mansions vex me. If they were dukes, or lords, or bankers, or well-known merchants, or well-known anybodyes, I could forgive them. I could look at their mansions and say, "All right; you are quite entitled to this sort of thing. You are eminent; you came over with the Conqueror, or you lent government money, or did something or other to gain distinction. You may not have come by your wealth honestly; but no matter, if you are thieves you are distinguished thieves. You are somebodyes. I should as soon think of quarrelling with you for having fine houses, as I should with coal-heavers for wearing fantail hats. The thing fits." But those thousands and thousands of nobodies. Where do they come from? Where do they belong to? Who were their fathers and mothers, and what sort of houses did *they* live in? Not in houses of this magnificent sort; for such houses did not exist in outlying quarters of the town a quarter of a century ago. There was but one scanty Belgravian then in London; now there are a crowded half-dozen. When I am out of humour, and happen to be wandering among the palaces of Brown, Jones, and Robinson, I am apt to say to myself, "What's the good of being able to scale Parnassus, and mount to the topmost steps of the Temple of Fame, if I am obliged

to hide my illustrious head in Hoxton? Although the trumpet of fame is blowing a loud fanfaronade for me all day long, I am not equal to a mansion in Tyburnia. Yet there are thousands for whom fame never blew a note, who come into possession of grand houses, and hold state in them as if by divine right."

One day lately, when I was in a very bad humour, I was passing the palace of Jones. There was a handsome carriage waiting at the door, and presently Jones himself came down the steps, assisted by a footman, and entered it. Jones's hair was slightly grey, but he had a plump, ruddy face, and looked like a person who enjoyed himself. Seeing that Jones was going out for his pleasure at three o'clock in the afternoon, I thought it probable that he had nothing else to do on the face of the earth but enjoy himself. This man, thought I to myself, is a sort of Fortunatus. Whenever he puts his hand in his pocket he finds money there. He is not obliged to make an effort to obtain it. He toils not, neither does he spin; yet he is magnificent, and has all the pleasures of the world at his command. Now, the aggravating reflection about this is, that if Jones *did* toil and spin, he wouldn't be half so well off as he is. What encouragement is there for me to go home—to Hoxton—and rack my brain, when all my best efforts are not equal in substantial result to Jones's doing nothing! I write a tragedy, he has but to write a cheque. This undistinguished Jones is my bloated aristocrat. When I see him lolling in his carriage, chinking the sovereigns in all his pockets, I feel ready for the barricades. I mutter between my teeth, "Down with the bloated Joneses!"

I ask, again, where do all these common people get their money? How should it be such an easy thing for them, and such a difficult thing for me? How provokingly cool they are over it! But if I, after a hard struggle, obtain possession of a hundred pounds or so, I am as nervous as possible until I get it safely into the bank. And even then my mind is not at rest. What if the bank should break! If I had five thousand pounds instead of five hundred to my account, I feel certain I should never trouble myself about the stability of the bank. This is what I envy—not wealth itself, but its potentiality.

When I saw Jones in his carriage roll off from his door, I went my way in a very ill humour. I don't know that I wanted anything that day. All was right at Hoxton; no duns nor disagreeables of any kind. I had seen my name in the papers; "rising young man, rapidly reaching the top round of the ladder" (one paper said I had reached it already); it was a very fine day; I was in very good health; I had several loose sovereigns in my pocket; and, for that day, and several more if I chose, I had nothing to do but enjoy myself. Still, I was hipped and out of humour. When I had wandered about for many hours among the gay scenes of the West-end, seeking unalloyed pleasure and finding it not, I turned in to a famous supper-

room, where digestion is promoted by minstrely. I had heard that to sit in this room and eat chops and baked potatoes while a tuneful choir, inspired by the divine Nine, sing glees and madrigals, was to compass the very round and top of human enjoyment. I had heard that those chops and potatoes, accompanied by the lyre, were medicine for the mind diseased; that they were potent to raze out the written trouble of the brain, and cleanse the stuff that weighs upon the heart. Remembering these things, I said to myself, "If a man should need an antidote to poisoned thoughts, this should be the shop where he may procure it."

I entered, and encountered the good Apothecary. His looks were not meagre; his weeds were not tattered. On the contrary, he had a very jolly rubicund face, and wore a most unexceptionable surtout. He smiled, shook me by the hand, gave me snuff from a chest (box is not the word), and called me his dear boy. The pain in my temper was vanishing at the very sight of the good Apothecary. Ere the medicinal chop and potato were set before me that pain departed. Yes, yes; I am willing to own it. Phillis is my only joy; and so warm is my heart becoming under the influence of the good Apothecary's potions, that I am ready, notwithstanding my entire and unalterable attachment to Phillis, to make an appointment with my pretty Jane, to meet me, meet me in the willow glen while the bloom is upon the rye; to sing Oh that a Dutchman's draught should be; hail sniling morn; lie me to the oak; ask (without the slightest expectation of a reply) what he shall have who killed the deer, bless the Queen, the Prince of Wales, the rest of the royal family, and all mankind. I am becoming reconciled to Hoxton, when suddenly my eye falls upon an elderly gentleman at one of the tables. It is Jones.

He is sitting drinking claret out of a crystal goblet, smoking a very choice cigar—I know it by the ash—and listening to the music with his eyes shut. I notice that his clothes are fine and rich; his fingers are covered with sparkling rings; his cambric shirt-front is ablaze with three dazzling brilliants. He is enjoying himself at every pore. I can see it by the quiet way he puffs his cigar, by the gusto with which he sips his Lafitte, by the artful and knowing way—practised Sybarite!—in which he keeps his eyes gently closed, that his ears may not be distracted from their draughts of delight. Bloated Jones! hated member of a nameless but pampered class. At the very sight of Jones, Hoxton starts up before me in all its meanness and loathsomeness. Look at him! how he wallows in pleasure. What a power of enjoyment he has! I feel certain that if he were to give me one of those choice cigars of his, I could not extract half the enjoyment from it that he does; I could not find half the flavour in the Lafitte. And see how thoroughly he enjoys the music; never opens his eyes for a moment; but listens, listens, while his face beams with an expression

of the most exquisite pleasure. By-and-by, when he has had his fill of delight, he will roll home in his luxurious carriage, while I—Ah! I see he is about to go now. He has thrown away the end of his cigar, and is putting on his gloves. A gentleman from the other end of the table comes forward with his hat and stick. The gentleman is evidently Jones's servant, his butler, or his valet. Fancy that! The gentleman hands Jones his hat and gold-headed walking-stick, and takes him by the arm. Bloated, pampered nobody! The waiters are making way for him as he passes along; the gentlemen at the tables are rising to draw their chairs out of his way.

"Is he so very distinguished a person, then?" I ask.

"Oh no," is the reply, "but the poor old gentleman is BLIND."

Blind! Let me go home to Hoxton and say my prayers.

CHINESE COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS.

THERE is a long and narrow street at Canton between the walls of the city and the Pearl River. It is paved, as streets are commonly paved in China, with flagstones so large that a single stone generally covers the whole breadth of the street. Only in certain parts can two sedan-chairs pass one another. Horses are rarely seen; a wheeled vehicle never. Tall perpendicular signboards are hung up containing inscriptions, showing the trades carried on in the shops to which they are attached, and culogising the wares recommended to the passers-by. These inscriptions form excellent materials for study of the Chinese language, and are curious exemplifications of Chinese character. "Not two prices" is a frequent addendum representing the "No abatement" of the British shopkeepers. The characters are often carved in gold, scarlet, or azure grounds, and the trader is more frequently known by some descriptive and flowery title than by a family name. There will be, among many others, "The Hong of Felicity;" "The Gathering of Brothers;" "The Budding of Hope;" "Parental Affection;" "The Hall of the Sages;" "The ever-blossoming Flowers;" "The Moonlight among the Peach-trees." At the entrance of a cook's shop there will be probably seen a glowing description of Manchurian and Chinese delicacies: "Fine birds'-nests," "Rich sea-slugs," "Newly-arrived sharks'-fins," "Tendons of deer," all "served up cheaply and courtously, so as to merit the undoubted approval of the guests." The clothes-warehouses are multitudinous, and some gaudy garment is hung up to fascinate buyers. There are magazines of native and foreign manufactures, porcelain and curiosity shops, ironmongery of all imaginary sorts, tea of fifty varieties, seal cutters, antique and modern; boot and shoemakers, of silk for the quality, cotton for the vulgar, and beautiful embroidery for the Kin-lien (golden lilies), that is to say, the small feet of

ladies of rank; herbalists, apothecaries, and quack medicine vendors; musical instrument makers, bankers and money-changers; fashionable tailors, letter-writers, matrimony brokers, conjurors; ambulatory barbers, with painted seats for the accommodation of their customers, and instruments for cleaning and beautifying the heads and tails of those to be operated on; fish-sellers, carrying in large tubs their live merchandise, to be killed only when they are purchased, and if not purchased, to be brought still living into the market at some future day; newsmen, who sell for the fifth part of a farthing the printed announcement of the hour; soups, cakes, fruits, sweetmeats, and a variety of viands are vended in great quantities in the streets and open places. All sorts of public cries are heard, and the beggars are among the most vociferous. One is pretty certain to be molested by water-carriers, whose buckets, hung from the two ends of a dancing bamboo borne on the shoulders, sway to and fro in the rapid progress of the bearer, and spill a portion of their contents over the garments of the passenger before the warning "Wai-ló" is heard. The Chinaman lives in an atmosphere of noise; the clang of multitudinous gongs fills the air from the rising to the setting sun. If a great man comes forth, vociferous shoutings herald his way. Loud and discordant music is the accompaniment alike of the bride who is led to her future domicile, and the corpse that is deposited in its final home. It is through the street just spoken of that the way is found to the execution place, close to the river, where Commissioner Yeh frequently caused many hundreds of men to be decapitated in a day, where the crosses for strangling are always exposed to the public gaze, close to heaps of human heads festering in foul corruption, and defiling the atmosphere with pestilential noisomeness.

Not far from this spot is the Ma-tow (Horse-head) quay. As we get near, there is a gathering and thickening of the crowd, among whom the smaller Kwan, or mandarins, are seen, having gold balls, with flowers in relief or engraved on their caps. These are the lowest functionaries. A smaller number with plain gold balls, the men of the next rank; then, the wearers of transparent and of opaque glass; then, ever diminishing in number, the dark blue and light blue balls; then, in the higher orders, the ornamented; and, highest of all, the plain red coral. The dresses of the mandarins are gorgeous, according to their rank. The most elevated have the stork and the peacock splendidly embroidered on the breast and the back of their rich garments. They wear black silk boots with high white soles, and have a chaplet of large beads round the neck. Some have plumes from eagles' wings, some foxes' brushes, a very few have peacocks' tail-feathers hanging behind from their caps. Great is the clamour of music, immense the assemblage of flags, painted dragons, and other grotesque devices: the shouts of the chair-bearers, the confusion of sedans, the demands for precedence, the cries and the wranglings—what does it all mean?

It all means that the barges are approaching

which convey the imperial commissioner, who arrives from Peking to superintend the triennial examinations. The procession has to make its way through the innumerable boats which cover the stream. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese have no domicile on the solid land. They are as aquatic as the ducks, their house companions and their favourite aliment, and generally repose under the same shelter. In their boats they are born, in their boats they marry, in their boats they die. The river population of China is the result of that redundancy of the human race for which the land furnishes an inadequate resource. These boats represent the greater or less opulence of the owners. From the San-pan (three planks) up to the Hwa-chuen (the flower boat), painted in gaudy green and gold, with decorated halls and swinging lamps, and orchestra, and theatricals, and gaming-tables, and frail ones with crushed feet—every gradation will be found. The humbler boats send forth the diligent coolies to their hard labour by day; the more ostentatious receive the do-nothing gay livers by night.

The sedan of the Ta-jin (his excellency) arrives. He is locked in when he leaves the capital, in order that he may hold no intercourse with any person likely to pervert his mind by suggestions, or to influence his decisions by bribes. He is to be delivered in his long progress from one authority to another, to be conducted to their Ya-muns (offices or palaces), and they are to be responsible for his being kept from any of the seductions to which he might be exposed. It is he who is charged with the selection of the great men of the future to whom the administration of the country will hereafter be transferred. It is he who may elevate the meanest to become the mightiest, and who holds in his hand that ladder from whose steps the poorest scholar may ascend to be the ruler of millions. From that body of candidates whose acquirements he is about to investigate, there will be chosen those who are to be the generals, the admirals, the governors, the viceroys, the censors, the cabinet councillors, to whom will be confided authority over more than four hundred millions of men.

As the sedan in which the high functionary was seated, uncovered, with his fan in his hand, was placed upon the quay, the governor of the province and the principal officials came forward to welcome him; but he received them with the ordinary Chinese salutation, the two hands touching one another, the head very slightly bent, but the countenance wholly unmoved. There are in every province seven officers who take the highest title, Great man: the Chi-tai (governor-general), Fu-tai (governor), Fan-tai (head of finance), Nie-tai (provincial judge), Yun-tai (salt collector), Leang-tau (grain collector), Tau-tai (circuit intendant). The superintendent of customs, known to us generally under the title of the Hoppo, is also a Ta-jin, ranking far beneath the other officers as regards his nominal salary, which is about one-tenth of that of the governor-general (he has eight thousand pounds a year),

yet believed, during the ancient days of monopoly, now happily departed, to be able to realise one hundred thousand pounds a year. The greater part of these officials are in attendance at the advent of the literary examiner.

We looked earnestly in the face of the grand functionary, on the occasion now recalled. It seemed as if it could never have been disturbed by a snile. It was fitted to inspire the scholar with awe and reverence for the great master. There was in it an imperturbable gravity, a concentrated unruffled dignity, as of a judge of appeal upon whom a responsibility lay greater than that of awarding life and death; for life and death are nothing in the eyes of a Chinaman when compared with the hopes and fears, the joys and the agonies which attach to triumph or defeat in the great literary conflict. In proportion to the disappointments of the rejected many, will be the delights of the chosen few. Strange that, amidst all the discords and desolations, the strifes and the slaughters, the anarchy, the revolts, and the revolutions which have agitated, and still agitate, "the central flowery land," the "heaven-canopied empire," this educational machinery has performed its functions almost uninterruptedly: the only institution which has not been shaken to its foundations, the only general and popular influence which has been able to maintain itself amidst the wrecks and the ruins of authority, the only ark which, in the eyes of a whole nation, has ever been regarded as holy, while the other representatives of imperial rule have been again and again overthrown and trampled into the dust.

Canton takes its designation from Kwan-tung (Extent East), the province of which it is the chief city. Every locality in China is known by some significant word. Hong-Kong, our British colony, means Fragrant Streams; and Cow-loon (nine dragons), which we have lately added to our dominions from the neighbouring continent, associates with its name an ancient popular legend. In large districts of Kwan-tung, intestine wars have raged for many generations between the Pun-ti (original land) and the Ha-ka (house settlement), a war which the Tartar government sought to turn to its own account, by encouraging now one and now another set of malcontents, in order to help the subjugation of both, though both frequently combine successfully to resist imperial taxation. These clans speak separate languages, though they use the same written signs. But the fighting is now suspended, and they are equally desirous of finding among the combatants any who may venture into the competitive field when the time for the great pacific contest arrives.

The newspapers have announced its arrival. No other matter is thought about, or talked about, in the gay mansions of the rich, or the dirty hovels of the poor. In every shop, in every warehouse, among the paupers in the streets, among the groups in the public places, there is but one all-absorbing topic, which gives unwonted vivacity to speakers and to listeners.

Everybody knows somebody who is about to enter the lists in the great hall of examination. The names of the different candidates are discussed among those acquainted with their respective merits. Each orator has a tale to tell of men whom he has seen, or of whom he has heard, who through the portals of the Kung-yuen have risen to fortune and to fame, ennobling themselves, and throwing the splendour of their own reputation over all their kindred. The busy city is stirred with a busier life. The imperial commissioner is come. When will the lists appear of those who have won the prizes? and what are the names which will be resplendent in those lists? Every district in the province has its representatives, and the history of the celebrated men of each is familiar to the whole community. Are not their titles written in the ancestral halls?

Canton is indeed crowded with visitors. The elementary schools of a province of twenty millions of inhabitants have sent forth their most advanced pupils, and there are more than eight thousand candidates who have been selected for examination. The influx of strangers, students, and their attendants, exceeds thirty thousand. Many youths of the opulent classes, who have had the advantage of special domestic education, and have been under the training of experienced teachers, come not only with their parents and relations, but with suites of servants, who may be seen wandering about admiring the wonders of the Yang-Ching (Ram city), the name by which the Cantonese are proud to distinguish their birthplace. They have a legend that in ancient days, when the place was beleaguered and menaced with starvation, five rams found their way through the gates, each bearing a sheaf of corn, an augury of relief and plenty. The besieging enemy was dispersed, the wants of the people were abundantly supplied, and, in perpetual memory of the great salvation, the rams were turned into stones, and a temple was erected in celebration of the event. These stones we have seen on the sacred edifice which bears their name. They may have been worn by time, but they are now only rude rough blocks, in which no resemblance can be traced to their supposed ovine origin.

Strange are the contrasts which the streets at Canton now present. Many a poor student may be seen, ill clad and exhausted, whom the alms of the charitable, the hardly-earned contributions of the family or the clan, have enabled to reach the provincial city. Many, unable to pay the expenses of transport, have to perform long and wearying journeys on foot; multitudes arrive by the canals and rivers, whose passage-boats are now overcrowded; some come in vessels roomy enough to furnish all the appliances of comfortable life, with abundance of attendants; the very wealthy are conveyed in sedan-chairs carried by four servants, the bamboo supporters resting on the shoulders instead of being sustained by the hands of the bearers. Messengers are sent before to make ready for their coming, and there is an unusual

exhibition of that state and parade of which the Chinese are so fond. But at the doors of the examination hall there is a general levelling. The credentials of patrician and plebeian are the same. Proclamations are everywhere distributed, calling upon all the candidates to have their passports in order, assuring them that they will be equally and honourably dealt with, requiring them to be themselves honest, to employ no artifices, to conceal nothing in their garments which may give them any advantage over their competitors.

What adds greatly to the extraordinary interest which relatives and family clans take in these examinations, is the glory which is reflected upon the whole race by the success of any one of its members. In China, rank is hereditary, not downwards, but upwards. They are the ancestors, and not the descendants of the man that is ennobled, who bear his titles and his honours. When great dignities are conferred, the father, grandfather, and the long line of predecessors have distinctions conferred upon them. The Chinese say, and with good reason, that they can make themselves acquainted with the past, but can have no security in the uncertainties of the future. The good and the wise man, they contend, is in himself a personal proof that he was trained by the good and the wise; but who can foretell what his children and grandchildren may be, especially in remote generations? A sage may give birth to a fool—a man of integrity to a knave. The reverence for their ancestors—it has been often called an idolatrous worship—is one of the most distinguishing characteristics of the whole Chinese nation; there are few men so wretched as not to be able to trace back their origin for many generations. Families—clans—have their ancestral halls, which every child is taught to think upon and to enter with reverence. Periodical visits, never neglected, with offerings at the graves of their progenitors, form a part of the national habits. This perpetual reference to the past, this almost universal belief “that the former days were better than these,” and must be looked to for instruction and guidance, is, indeed, the great barrier to improvement; but, in the study of China, the backward-looking tendencies of the whole nation must be constantly kept in view as the true key for unlocking many a seeming mystery, and explaining the prejudices which otherwise appear inexplicable. An exaggerated estimate of the national greatness, and of the infinite superiority of the great teachers of China to those of all other tribes and tongues, has naturally led to a contempt for everything that is foreign. The Taou-li, which is the concentration of “reason and courtesy,” the representative of the highest civilisation, is believed to be unknown to the “outer peoples.” The earliest maps of the world—and the Chinese possess many—exhibit the great central flowery land surrounded by vast deserts, over which are scattered wild animals and uninstructed men. There is a circular border of about three hundred miles in width, of which the portion most adjacent to the empire was appropriated to banished convicts, and the regions beyond to

various barbarous clans—the more savage as the more removed from the polished centre. The earliest books contain instructions for ruling the man and the E barbarians, many of whom brought their tribute to the imperial court, and returned to their native haunts, having learnt “obedience and submission.” The Chinese emperors claimed dominion over the whole world, and the various modes of rule are frequently referred to. “Our ancient kings,” says an old chronicler, “ruled China by a constituted government—but the barbarians could not be so controlled. Proper officers were appointed to explain to them how their conduct should be regulated. There would be terrible confusion in introducing amongst barbarians our orderly administrations, just as there would be in attempting to regulate the conduct of wild animals by enlightened laws.” Confucius had expressed a wish to reside among the “Nine tribes” of barbarians. “How can you dwell,” he was asked, “among a people so degraded?” “How can they remain degraded,” he replied, “if a good man dwells among them?” On more than one occasion Confucius taught the Chinese that though China was the fountain-head of order and morality, there was much to learn from the properly disciplined government of some of the barbarians. Mencius also counsels one of the kings “to extend his soothing influence over barbarian tribes;” while in other places he says that he has heard of the habits of the barbarians being improved by the Chinese, but had never heard that the Chinese had been improved by the barbarians. Among the most popular proverbs is one of few words: “Tenderness for what is far away, affection for what is near.”

No country in the world possesses so admirable an educational organisation as China: it embraces and permeates through the whole social system. If the things taught were only as perfect as are the means of teaching—if, in other words, the laws to be administered were equal to the facilities for their administration—if the motives and the means for studying the various results of modern civilisation and advanced philosophy were such as are now exclusively confined to researches into an ignorant, or, at best, a half-instructed antiquity, the development of mind would be marvellous. Whenever a Bacon shall appear in an influential position, seize and guide the handle of the wonderful instructional machine in China, and proclaim thus: “Let authority be barren, let experiment be fertile,” the intellectual revolution of a third of the human race will be at hand. The passion for literary distinction, if once disassociated from the blind admiration for the writings of the sages, and from the traditions of the past, would be an all-potent fulcrum for the elevation of the national mind. But European influence will be enfeebled unless it is content to recognise how very much there is that is truly excellent in the Sacred Books of the Chinese, whose ethical instructions are almost unexceptionable, and which have moulded the laws and the literature of China for a hundred generations,

and through a very large portion of the most densely populated regions of the globe. Of all the children of men, Confucius is he whose voice has resounded from a higher antiquity, and has been listened to over a wider extent, and among greater multitudes of men, than any other human teacher. The language of the Hebrew prophets is extinct; the classical outpourings of Homer and Virgil would be now unintelligible in Athens or in Rome; but if Confucius and Mencius were now to appear, they would be understood by five hundred millions of human beings.

And it is with their writings, and in those of nearly contemporary teachers, that the literary candidates are expected to be best acquainted. A thorough mastery of the ancient annals, of the commentaries which have explained, and the historical facts which illustrate them, forms the best title to honorary distinction. Beauty of penmanship, or rather of pencilship, graces of style, especially in the form of poetical antitheses, are prominent recommendations. In the councils of the early kings are found admirable lessons of wisdom. Yu, who reigned forty centuries ago, said: "Whatever their rank, let all wise men be marked for distinction, and not one be suffered to remain in oblivion. A king should prefer the counsels of the wise to his own opinions." Tai-kea (B.C. 1753) was thus addressed by his minister: "Perpetually reform yourself. Raise none to office but for their virtues and talents." Woo (B.C. 1324) refused to make any of his courtiers his councillors, but sent all over his empire to discover the most intelligent of his subjects, who thus advised his master: "Merit alone must be rewarded. The tranquillity or the confusion of the empire depends on those who are placed in authority." The books of Confucius are full of exhortations to the selection of proper men to office: "To secure the obedience of the people, promote the upright and punish the vicious." He called a minister "a public robber," who deprived the people of the services of an eminent man. Mencius says, that "to avoid disgrace, a prince must patronise the learned and honour the virtuous." The Emperor Wan-ti (B.C. 179) published a proclamation calling upon every official to inquire and to report upon the most deserving person in their locality, "having knowledge of the world, acquaintance with state affairs, and, above all, having firmness and honesty enough to inform me truly of what is unbecoming in my conduct." A succession of sovereigns have repeated and confirmed this and similar sentiments. Imbued and encouraged with such lessons, illustrated by hundreds of examples of their application, by the elevation to high office of men even of the humblest origin, the Chinese student enters upon his competitive career.

The preliminary examinations take place in the principal town of the different districts, of which there are ninety-one in the province of Kwang-tung. These examinations are open to all comers, without distinction. They take place once in eighteen months, under the direction of

the Chi-hien, or district magistrate, a mandarin generally of the seventh grade. The selected scholars then proceed to the departmental city—there are nine of these in the province—where the prefect (Chi-foo, a mandarin of the fourth rank) presides, and from these the Seu-tsai are elected, who proceed to the provincial city for the triennial examinations.

The number of candidates on this occasion who had in the departmental cities obtained the grade of Seu-tsai, was eight thousand seven hundred, from whom seventy-two are, according to imperial decrees, to be elected to the rank of Keu-jin, and conveyed to Peking for presentation to the emperor. Twenty-eight are to be chosen from the scholars of the provincial city and its environs. It is required—there being allowed only eight exceptional cases—that every candidate should prove the settlement of his family in a particular locality for at least three generations.

The provincial governor is locked up during the examinations in the hall with the imperial commissioner, and is prohibited from holding intercourse with any but the imprisoned students, for whose accommodation no less than ten thousand cells are provided. It is generally understood that one in twelve is nominated by the special favour and patronage of the commissioner, and for the nomination of each of these a large sum is ordinarily paid, which is deemed a fair perquisite to the honourable and distinguished official; but when corruption exceeds these moderate bounds, the risk of denunciation and punishment is extremely great. We have before us a Peking Gazette of 1858, in which there is a long report of the trial of a bribed examiner who was brought before the Board of Punishment, and, with his confederates and the bribing candidate, ordered to be decapitated. It was proved that a rolled essay, not written by the student, was fraudulently and clandestinely passed in his name to the head examiner, who was one of the principal secretaries of state; and the imperial decree declares that both examiners and literary graduates must be advised that they are to be beheaded if there be any dishonest collusion, or if degrees are purchased by money. Should there be a false assumption of name, or illegal acts be employed to obtain office, the offender shall wear the Tan-kia, or wooden pillory, at the door of the chief magistrate's office, and be exposed, with a description of his crime, to the gaze of all the people. Banishment is to follow the neglect of subordinate duties connected with the literary examinations. In the case in question, the nomination took place by "secret signs." "It might have been," says the emperor, "a slight sin" if the money had been lent to defray the expenses before, or had been given as a present to one of the functionaries after the examination, but as it was, capital punishment must be inflicted." Against this decision an appeal was made on behalf of the minor offenders, but after the decapitation of the principals. The emperor summoned his council to consider the appeal, but with respect to one of the criminals, who had endeavoured

to bribe his father, he orders that he be beheaded without reprieve. "Father and son have incurred the death-penalty, but, in truth, our heart cannot endure the decapitation of both at one blow. Let the father, then, experience our mercy, and expiate his crime by his exertions in the military colonies. This is an act of goodness irrespective of the law. There is a certain difference in the degrees of guilt of the others;" so the emperor directs that all be degraded, and some be banished. "The father of one of the guilty has recently died; ascertain whether he has left any other son; if not, let him be allowed to remain till the hundred days of mourning are ended, and his transportation must take place after his father has been becomingly buried." But for this special interference, the power of the council would have been limited to commuting the sentence of decapitation into that of strangling. So the emperor forestalls their decision, and he requires that further investigation and punishment according to law be directed against other charges of improbity. He declares that this species of crime does not come under the character of ordinary offences: "The examinations for degrees are the great institutions for the selection of true talent. The punishment of beheading must be awarded alike to those who receive and those who offer bribes." He will not, in this case, allow the ordinary distinction between the attempt to commit and the committal of a crime. He directs his peremptory order to be recorded "as a law for ever more." In the year 1859, the emperor's brother, Yih-jin, was, by imperial decree, handed over to the Board of Punishment, because, during the literary examination, he had treated a censor with disrespect.

The four grades of literary rank in China have been compared, with some show of reason, to our B.A., M.A., LL.D., and Professors. The lowest is the *Seu-tsai* (flowery talent), then *Keu-jin* (elevated man), next *Tsui-sze* (advanced scholar), and last, *Han-lin* (literary forest). No official book exists describing the process of public education, but everybody is acquainted with its nature. Like the constitution of England, it is a *lex non scripta*, better understood by the people than acts of parliament or royal proclamations. As in England certain forms and usages, the guarantees of popular freedom, are grafted, as it were, into our very nature, so in China every man looks to the literary examinations for the ratification of his fond dreamings on behalf of his children or his kindred, nor will disappointment upon disappointment destroy the ever germinating seed of expectation and excitement. Again and again the student will return to the encounter if he can obtain a renewal of his credentials for admission. Every precaution is, or ought to be, taken to keep the students in ignorance of the subjects on which they are to be examined, and that they do not conceal in their dresses any books or manuscripts to aid them in reply to questions where extempore answers are required. To every student a large blank sheet

of paper is given; it is twenty feet in length, thirteen inches in width, and is folded like a fan into a breadth of about four inches and a half. On one unrulled portion he writes the draft or brouillon of his essays; another part is ruled with red lines, for the fair copy which is to be delivered to the examiners. No competitor has a chance of passing whose handwriting is not beautiful; no amount of knowledge or intellectual superiority would be accepted as an excuse for slovenly or inaccurate characters. Calligraphy is a universal accomplishment among educated Chinese. They adorn their houses with the autographs of eminent men, and the various productions of artistic scribes are very highly appreciated. The Chinese fancy revels in accommodating the signs of their language to shapes of flowers, and birds, and animals, to ancient jars, tripods, and seals, to the leaves of the bamboo, to legendary tales, to groups of men, and pictures of nature. Six varieties of writing are studied: the square, the round, the official, the ornamental, the running, the condensed. Sometimes the characters are written with such rapidity, the pencil not being lifted from the paper, as to be illegible to any but the initiated; sometimes every stroke is elaborated with all the care of a miniature artist. They are sometimes painted a foot long, with a free hand and a coarse brush; at others, the finest camel-hair pencil is used to produce characters in the minutest perfection; and, to say the truth, no handwriting in the world can be compared, in variety of forms or in artistic grace and beauty, with that of the Chinese. No present is more highly valued than a scroll or a fan on which a person of literary reputation has written the aphorism of a sage, or the verse of a poet. The association of the graphic with the poetical art is sufficient for the establishment of the highest reputation. We have often listened to the reproach from the learned in China: "You are warriors, indeed, but yours is the language of barbarians, and you can have no poetry." In a communication received from one of the kings of the Taiping rebels, he asked, "Have you any poetry written by the hand of God the Father? If you have not, I have!" One of the causes of the failure of this great insurrection was the exclusion of all its partisans from the competitive examinations. Among the leaders there was not a single man who had ever obtained a literary distinction—a circumstance quite sufficient to deprive them of any influence among the Chinese people. However well grounded the complaints against Tartar oppression, however unpopular and corrupt the administration in many of its departments, there can be no doubt the time-sanctioned general reverence for the educational organisation, and the participation of the people, through that organisation, in the distribution of the powers of government, has been the cement—almost the only cement—which has held together races so multitudinous, scattered over so vast a territory, and, for the most part, so far removed from the central and controlling power.

In the province of Kwang-tung there are probably a million and a half of scholars under instruction. Of these, not more than one in two hundred would be selected as fit candidates for the triennial examination; and of the candidates so selected, not one in a hundred can obtain the lowest grade of literary honour, so very many are the blanks, so very few the prizes. There are, perhaps, no classes in China whose state is more pitiable than that of the rejected competitors. To obtain official employment is the universal ambition, and this ambition is one of the primary incentives to the competitive struggles. Poor rejected candidates in the provincial examinations do not willingly engage in any of the ordinary trades. They become instructors in the families of prosperous men, teachers in schools, writers of letters, petitions, and caligraphic scrolls. Some become fortune-tellers, geomancers who are consulted as to the auspicious places where to bury the dead, arrangers of marriage-settlements, advocates—any profession which has a smack of learning or literature about it, not connected with handicraft labour. It is sad to witness the forlorn condition of many of these unhappy men, who, having been engaged again and again in the educational strife, have exhausted their strength and their resources, and abandon themselves to despair. Such may be found among the gamblers, the opium-smokers, the listless hangers-on upon others more fortunate than themselves. There are examples of youths of fourteen and fifteen years having obtained the highest distinctions, while old men above fourscore are sometimes found perseveringly pressing forward for re-examination. Even of those who succeed in obtaining the primary degree, and which is deemed a credential for office, there are very many who never obtain an appointment, and who remain in a state of perpetual discontent and disaffection to the government. One of the prominent leaders of the Taepings was a disappointed candidate. So intense and exhausting are the exertions of the students, that many deaths occur during and after the examinations. Anxiety, doubt, despair, are the too-frequent visitants of those confined for many days to their solitary cells. They all know how small the chance of any one can be in so fierce and multitudinous a competition, and it may well be believed that the strain is often too great for ordinary strength to bear. Nothing but the most devoted study can bring success. All knowledge in China is represented by an acquaintance with the written characters, so that the faculty of memory is of greater value than the gift of high intellect. The range of acquirement between the seven hundred characters which are taught in the elementary schools and the seventy thousand which are said by some writers to exist, or to have existed, if the whole field of literature be explored, is immensely wide, and must be tested with great difficulty. In the Chinese estimate, literary merit would generally be weighed by the number of characters understood and explained by the student. A tolerably educated

man will generally master from four thousand to five thousand. Though there are a great many spoken dialects in China, the written signs are universally the same; but for all official purposes the mandarin language is universally employed. The scholars of the Manchoo race are examined in their own tongue, but are expected to be familiar with the books of the Chinese sages.

A few specimens of the texts upon which the candidates are called to write their essays will best elucidate the character of the examinations. They are mostly extracts from the books of the sages. These passages are given for commentary and illustration, or as subjects for poetical composition. The first inquiry is, whether the student knows who is the author of the text?

"Even as the united powers of heaven and earth support millions of created beings, so the sages, aided by the virtuous, sustain the multitudinous people."—*From the Book of Changes.*

In this case the student would be expected to carry out the analogy between celestial and terrestrial influences; to associate the wise with what is excellent in heaven, and the virtuous with what is excellent on earth; and to quote examples from the ancient annals of the application of the apophthegm to the good government and felicity of the nation.

"Where a hundred officials govern worthily, they form by separate threads a brilliant cord."—*From the Book of Annals.*

"The herbage! how widely it spreads, how loftily it towers, and how it sparkles with dew."—*From the Book of Odes.*

Apply this to deeds of virtue.

"The prince of the Tsin state sent gifts by Hanki."—*From Confucius's Spring and Autumn.*

When did this occur? Who was the prince? What was the state? What were the gifts? Who was Hanki? What were the relations then existing between China and the outer nations?

"For introduction to office there must be a thorough acquaintance with the three sections of the Siau-ya (in the Book of Odes). The drum is struck on entering school, the book-case is opened. Let the tasks be diligently done."—*From the Book of Rites.*

Here encouragement is given for the discussion of the whole subject of official education. For long quotations memoriter from the Siau-ya, the bookcase being opened, what books should be there, and of the books there which ought to be most diligently studied?

Short sentences reported to have fallen from the lips of sages are made the subject of very elaborate explanations and comments. The master (Confucius) said "No—I." One of the characters means negation, the other self. These are materials for a volume against egotism. Again, the master said, "Why late?" No better hint could be given for an eloquent outbreak against procrastination. So the master said, "Let every man give his opinion." Here the student will dilate on the benefits of free discussion, tolerance for the views of others, no monopolising intrusion of our own.

The master inquired, "How can heaven hold discourse?" What is the answer to be given? Sometimes the most common-place truisms, having the authority of a great name, are proposed, and are required to be reproduced in other forms, to be versified, explained, or commented on. The master said, "Knowing is to know: not knowing is not to know. This is knowledge." It is obvious that such a dictum opens the whole field of inquiry as to what is meant by knowledge.

These subjects are taken from a Kwang-tung examination. In the province of Kiang-soo, where ten thousand candidates are generally gathered together, the first text given was, "They had mastered the Five Classics." It is a passage from an obscure author, Wang-tsung, who lived in the first century of the Christian era, and of whose works scarcely a copy was to be found. Those that were discovered sold immediately, at extravagant prices. The next was from a distinguished philosopher of the third century: "The sage nourishes the source"—meaning the emperor. Then came a demand for a poetical commentary on a verse of a poet of the fourth century, in stanzas of seven characters to a line: "To music and study my soul is devoted." And last, to produce a poem, taking for a model an ancient versifier: "Imitate Lu Hsiang-shan's headings to the portraits of the Eighteen Scholars." To the students who were the least advanced, the subject given was: "When the drizzling rain of spring falls upon the flags, the swallows fly low."

One of the prize poems of the Canton examination will illustrate the general character of the favoured compositions. The author begins by complimenting the Hieh-tai (literary examiner) thus:

"Your official communications in their elegance resemble harmonious music. They are beautifully intelligible, and clear as the clouds in the calm atmosphere of spring."

He then calls the attention of the examiner to the fact that in the Canton river a thousand foreign ships are brought by merchants from a distance of ten thousand miles, but if ministers do their duty they will be thoroughly searched and scrutinised.

"If the people run after gaieties and luxuries, how can they accumulate wealth? But when the sick and the poor are cared for, plenteous years will come."

"Inhabitants of the remotest isles will be grateful, and happy scholars will arrange their plans."

"Make good laws, and the outer tribes will respect the flowery land."

The references to the English are many.

"Trample on the hoar-frost, you will harden it to ice; but if you nourish and support a tiger, woe is yours should you tread on his tail."

"How can we allow the ugly race (foreigners) to flourish and increase like the grass?"

"Even a victorious army could not transform these vile insects into men."

"They talk about heaven; they know not

what is correct; they circulate strange doctrines."

"But we must not therefore forsake right principle, and our dignity must guard us against the depraved."

"Lamentable it is that the minds of the intelligent should be darkened by what is not, but only seems to be good. So is truth perverted, and the simple and ignorant are deluded."

"But we must hold to our doctrines and strengthen our national spirit, and diligently follow our established rules, and press them close to our hearts."

"In ancient days, the compositions of the sages were beautiful; our officials should still guide us by correct teachings."

Then follow quotations from the sacred books.

"When rulers are right-principled the people are virtuous and obedient."

"By caution, integrity, and justice, the people are easily managed."

Excellent are the counsels of Kwo-yin and Keang-tung: "Blame not the dog though he should carry away the bones from the sepulchre. Be not angry with the silkworm when it eats the leaves in the desert. The crafty rabbit contrives to have many a hole. Even the stupid dove can find some empty nest."

"Foreigners long to see the imperial palace gate of precious stones. Let us not be complacent with them, though they give a golden goblet for a bow's length of land." (Alluding to the concession of Hong-Kong.) "Listen not to their unmeaning and pragmatical falsehoods. Yet must we try to instruct before we can conscientiously imprison them. We must proclaim the emperor glorious, rich, and cause his habitation to be honoured. So shall his splendid light illumine the Eastern sea. As the dawning day bursts into the upper chambers, and the cloudy spectres hide themselves in the sky—as the autumnal waves are becalmed when they pass over the palace of the ocean dragon. Let scholars, by the diffusion of right principles, help to tranquillise the people. Seize the handle of the plough, and the people will be grateful to the enlightened prince. Pleasure shall dwell with the cottage, though within there be only coarse food and water. And beneath every roof of the hospitable nation perfect tranquillity shall reign."

The political allusions in this composition, which are quite the reflection of the national mind, recommended it no doubt to the approval of the imperial examiner, and would be likely to obtain for the author the favour of the court.

The highest literary title is that of Chwang-yuen, or president of the Han-lin College. We had the honour of holding some intercourse with the last person elected to this distinction. He was the son of a man who kept a small stationery shop in an obscure street at Ningpo. The whole town and neighbourhood was in a state of bewildered joy when the great news of his nomination arrived. Processions, illuminations, public rejoicing, universal visitings, occu-

pied everybody's thoughts. The humble domicile of the father was crowded with people of the highest rank bringing their congratulations to the parents, family, and friends of him who was lifted to the apex of the pyramid of literary glory, whose brightest light was shed on the most adjacent kindred, but spread over the city, the country, and even to the remotest parts of the province.

In the time of Lord Macartney's embassy (1793), the name of the Chwang-yuen was Pwan-she-nghan. Forty-six years afterwards, the following petition to the emperor appeared in the Peking Gazette. It is a melancholy picture of old age, broken down by intense labour:

"Pwan-she-nghan, a principal secretary of state, upon his knees presents a memorial, with the sincerity of a subject he makes to his sovereign his honest representation, upon which, while he looks upward, he implores the sacred glance.

"He would humbly state that, since the commencement of the fourth intercalary moon, he has been subject to a diarrhoea which he accidentally contracted; the distress caused by this, day and night, brought on lumbago. But as for a time it did not interfere with his kneeling and rising in the imperial presence, as soon as his furlough was over he returned to his duties in council. Having been repeatedly honoured by the condescending benevolence of your majesty, by the kindness which finds nothing too small for its consideration, his heartburn grew worse, his loins were more afflicted, he prayed for a furlough of twenty days, and his majesty was graciously pleased to reply: 'There is no reason for limiting his leave to a given day; let him take his time, and place himself under medical treatment.' He daily looked forward to his recovery, longing to requite, were it only a thousandth part of, the imperial bounty. But during forty days the heartburn and the lumbago have become more violent. Walking, sitting, standing, lying down, he is constrained to restlessness. His breath and blood fail. Every day he is more broken and exhausted.

"Prostrate, he reflects on the importance of the business in the different courts over which he presides, and that his sickly frame cannot speedily be restored to health. He has been so often overwhelmed by the perfect compassion of his sovereign, and is so dismayed with the sense of his official uselessness, that, looking upward, he implores his sacred bounty to relieve his servant from his various functions, so that he may be attended to in the city, and the mind and body find repose, and hope for partial recovery. Once restored, it will be his duty to bow his head into the mire at the palace gate, and to beseech his majesty again to accept his services.

"If his prayer be heard, the favour shown him from his youth will be boundlessly increased. Unable to support his terror and his trepidation, he presents this his written memorial."

The address illustrates the position of the

first subject of the empire, the tallest tree in the literary forest (the Han-lin), in communication with the Tien-tsz, "the son of heaven."

The military examinations are such as would have suited the middle ages. They are mere displays of personal prowess and agility, without any reference to scientific tactics or strategy. There is no instruction in artillery or engineering services, no reading of books on the construction of fortifications, or the art of war. To say the truth, the trade of a soldier is somewhat despised by a nation among whom the plough is held in greater reverence than the sword. Not long ago the Emperor of the French sent three hundred Minié rifles to the Emperor of China; the present was not accepted: first, because the Chinese did not know how to use them; and secondly, because the English did know, and they might possibly fall into our hands. The fortifications we destroyed have been mostly reconstructed exactly as before, and of the guns generally found in China, it has been truly said there is more danger for him who stands near the touch-hole than before the muzzle. At one military examination we saw the troops divided into two armies—the imperial legions and the legions of the enemy. At the advance of the first, with banners, and music, and much shouting, the latter all fell on their faces, shamming death. The prizes were awarded to the men who could raise the heaviest stone, fling the hammer to the greatest distance, shoot an arrow, or drive a spear most successfully, parry off a blow with a shield, or most dexterously slip aside from the onset of a foe. There were some assaults by lancers on miserable ponies, much firing from matchlock jingals, of which one man bore the cannon on his shoulder, and another directed the aim and lighted the fuse behind. The marine reviews are more ridiculous than the military: Many flags, much noise, grotesque gymnastics, swimming with bladder-bags and diving without them. As yet, not a war-ship has been built on a European model. Almost every Chinese junk has great eyes painted on both sides of the prow, and still the words may be heard from satisfied admirers, "No got eyes, how can see?"

KEEPING OUT OF IT.

By all means keep out of it; "it" generally representing an endless supply of hot water, sometimes a barrel of boiling pitch for a diversion, sometimes a mass of dirt and clinging mud, most frequently a tray full of tempting-looking pies with bitter pills for plums. What is the good of going into it? Without the slightest desire for the state of oysterdom, and without being in any way one of the peace-at-any-price men, I maintain that to keep out of it, and not to go into it, is frequently a proof of the highest wisdom, of the greatest self-control, and sometimes of the most stately heroism that can be shown; also, nine times out of ten, a proof that you hold wider views on the matter

of each man's elbow-room than your neighbours can compass. Going into it, indeed, is for the most part only a milder term for aggression and persecution; a cold kind of auto-da-fé, with interference and ill nature for fagots and tar-barrels.

When that small, smart, pert young chandler called upon me the other day, with the memorial praying for a public repudiation by the parish of the Reverend A. B.'s doctrines concerning election and free grace—with the presentation of the same to the Diocesan to follow—what was the good of signing it, and so plunging head-foremost (or hand-foremost rather) into that spluttering caldron of spiritual wrath? Nothing could possibly come of it but heart-burnings, and the rising of rebellious gorges, ending in the slaughter of that sweet saint, Charity, who is always dying a martyr's death among the flying stones of belligerent churches. What business was it of mine what views the Reverend A. B. held? So long as he left me to follow my own path in peace, he was surely welcome to walk how and where he would! And if he preferred the thorns and crags and arid wastes of long-tailed disquisitions on things never to be proved or explained, to the rich and generous corn-fields of practical religion in good works, was it my business to fling a lasso round his heels, and clap him under the extinguisher of my lord bishop's prelatie mitre?—or should I be greatly advanced in godliness myself by checking the manner of growth in godliness adopted by another? If the reverend incumbent chose thistles instead of wheaten bread, that was his affair, not mine, nor yet the chandler's. I presume he enjoyed his thistles, else he would not have chosen them; and neither I nor any one else can be held responsible for his spiritual digestion in that respect.

So with that tremendous quarrel between the two retired East Indians, wherein society was "shaken to its foundation," as Miss Mings, the head milliner and senior Sunday-school teacher, said: what was it to me whether the major or the captain was in the wrong about that famous tiger-hunt which made all the turmoil? It was a matter of the most perfect indifference to every right-minded person, whether the major had ridden side by side with the tiger for a good hundred yards, snapping an untrustworthy old Joe in his face, or if the captain had shot him dead half an hour before, as he went unattended into the very depths of his jungle lair. Of course one story or the other was a sham; perhaps both; but what did it signify to me, which, or if either? I only know that an astonishing number of expletives were expended on the occasion, that our pleasant little whist club was broken up, that the county divided into sides, and that the sides fought together like tigers themselves, and that the neutrals who, like myself, wished to steer clear of both Seylla and Charybdis, were sure to be wrecked on the rocks of the one and swallowed up in the whirlpool of the other, with most indiscriminate impartiality. This was not keeping out of it to very good

purpose, certainly; but, bad as it was, it was better than going into it; for if not in the full meridian of cordiality with either party, there was the placid twilight of toleration with both, in the brief intervals of social sanity that did sometimes intervene. It was certainly unpleasant enough to have to consider who one could, and who one could not, ask to meet each other; whether this was a majorite, or that a captainian, and if one's dinner would explode in a bomb-shell, or one's supper terminate in a duel, for want of a good memory and the art of fitly pairing; still, it was something in the scramble to be able to be on speaking terms with both, however cold and stiff and wooden the tube through which one spoke.

But if the quarrels of captains and majors, and the faction fights of small communities are bad things to handle, what are family jars and domestic discords? Do you know what stinging-nettles are? Are you aware of what salt on open sores is like? Can you conscientiously recommend as a pleasant experience, actual cautery, and the application of a bunch of cupping-glasses? If you are of a nature to rejoice in these things, then, by all means, dip your hand into the dish of family discussions—thrust your fingers into the pickles contained in family jars—and when you have tasted of the bitter brine thereof, say candidly if the food has been to your liking. It is a little difficult, perhaps, to keep out of it in this case. What between Uncle John's hardness and Aunt Betsy's temper, what with brother Tom's passion and sister Jane's obstinacy, you are almost obliged to take sides and go into it with the rest; keeping out of it being received as treachery by all, and therefore doing no good to you or to any. There are times and circumstances when one must, in self-defence, belong to black or white; grey and the three primitives being alike repudiated. And if to hang out a banner keeps your windows from being broken and your front door from being battered in—and if to wear a cockade ensures a whole crown instead of a cracked one—why it is only common sense to flaunt an acreage of bunting if need be, and to stick a cocksoomb on your top-knot as big as a Christmas clown's, fastening it with pins like skewers, if such is the pleasure of the party belonging. It need not be a white feather, nor a red banner, that one sports; one need not be a coward nor an incendiary; but if the world about us insists on badges and cockades, by all means let us adopt them too, so long as they do not sign us to injustice or to riot. One has to keep out of singularity as well as out of meddling, remember.

Scandals and gossipings are things to be kept out of, rigidly; with an unbending back and lips hermetically sealed. If indeed any one likes an affectionate affiliation with hornets, and rather prefers than not a wasps'-nest for a domicile, let him go into the world of gossip—that floating, restless, Protean world where nothing is as it seems, or seems as it is. He will have a rare time of it, and ample op-

opportunities for studying the properties of venom and the law of projectiles. And one thing I devoutly hope he will have an opportunity for studying—the law of the moral boomerang, which brings back upon his own pate, and with a pretty sharp crack, too, the scandal and the lie which he has flung at another. If people would but keep out of the vortex of gossip a great many more lives than are allowed to do so now would stand clear and free of blame; for gossip, as a rule, deals in lies not truths, and for one accusation with a root grounded in fact there are thousands head downwards, with all four feet in the air and not a leg to stand on.

It is a mistake to suppose that gossip is localised in its growth—that it is to be found in the country among the gorse and bracken, and not in the towns between the rows of red brick houses, with windows staring into each other's eyes, and idle wits watching curiously from behind transparent blinds. The truth is, it is of no special birthplace. Given the soil of ill nature and the climate of idleness, and you will reap as much scandal and gossip in one day as would serve a moderate appetite for a year's digestion, whether you go out into the lanes or into the streets to shear and to glean. But it is a harvest to be avoided; a reaping-hook to be touched with hands cased in mail, and fingers tipped with steel, unless you would be cut to the bone in merited retaliation. Keep out of it. Of all the shibboleths, defunct or extant, this is the wisest, the most potent, and the most renowned; keep out of it; especially in the matter of scandal and gossip.

I have known a country society which withered away all to nothing under the dry rot of gossip only. Friendships once as firm as granite dissolved to jelly and then ran away to water, only because of this; love that promised a future as enduring as heaven and as stable as truth, evaporated into morning mist that turned to a day's long tears, only because of this; a father and a son were set foot to foot with the fiery breath of an anger that would never cool again between them, only because of this; and a husband and his young wife, each straining at the hated leash which in the beginning had been the golden bondage of a God-blessed love, sat mournfully by the side of the grave where all their love and all their joy lay buried, also only because of this. I have seen faith transformed to mean doubt, hope give place to grim despair, and charity take on itself the features of black malevolence, all because of the spell-words of scandal and the magic mutterings of gossip. Great crimes work great wrongs, and the deeper tragedies of human life spring from its larger passions; but woful and most melancholy are the uncatalogued tragedies that issue from gossip and detraction; most mournful the shipwreck often made of noble natures and lovely lives by the bitter winds and dead salt waters of slander. So easy to say, yet so hard to disprove—throwing on the innocent all the burden and the strain of demonstrating their

innocence, and punishing them as guilty if unable to pluck out the stings they never see, and to silence words they never hear—gossip and slander are the deadliest and the cruellest weapons man has forged for his brother's hurt.

Interference generally in things not personally belonging to us, is to be kept out of as one would keep out of scarlet fever and small-pox: moral quixotism, and the fighting with wind-mills not on our own estate, being a terrible waste of wholesome energy, and of time which is the capital of the future. And, above all, interference in other people's conjugal difficulties is to be avoided with the widest skirts and the longest steps of any. What does it signify to us in any way when Mr. and Mrs. Hatewell jangle in public for the edification of their unmarried friends, as wild birds, encaged, might sing warning duets to their freer brethren fluttering curiously round the limed twigs? So long as they do not drag us into the fray, their somewhat indiscreet way of testifying to the disappointments of life are as the wind whistling through the dead branches of the forest trees—sounds full of mournful meaning truly, but in no manner incumbent on us to criticise or to end. Besides, even with Mr. and Mrs. Hatewell, who seem ready to tear out each other's eyes at a moment's notice, and who, you would imagine, must infallibly come into the police court or the divorce—perhaps both if their present state of feeling continues much longer—even with them active interference is simply putting our fingers between the bark and the tree, with a hearty nip for our pains and sole reward. All that is required of us is a decent mute assent to each when the flood-gates of complaint are opened, and we are admitted into the penetralia of their discontent; but expressed sympathy? open speech? partisanship? exhortation? denial of the bitter charge and ironing down the scamy side?—my dear friends, if you would save your skins, keep out of *this* hallucination, and let Mr. and Mrs. Hatewell flourish their own quarter-staves in their own way, without any let, hindrance, or aid from you.

Out of anything like criticism on our friends' servants, dress, acquaintances, dinners, children, or housekeeping, it is incumbent on all the wise to keep, as carefully as out of a lazaretto full of the plague-smitten, or out of a battle-field with more bullets than have billets. Here and there one may light upon a candid soul with a good digestion and an easy temper, who can hear a hostile opinion without bitterness or wrath, but the number is so exceedingly small, while the tale of those ready to denounce you to the Inquisition if you hint at a flaw in their perfectness, so monstrously large—and you never know which is which till you try by actual experiment—that the sermon may be preached without an if, and the rule made absolute independent of exceptions. Keep out of it. Whatever we see lying cross to our own ideas in the houses of our private friends, it is our best wisdom to keep out of it, and not to dream of the insane folly of attempting to set it straight. People's eyes

differ; and what is straight to one is out of the level to another; and the crookedness which sends Smith frantic is only a pleasant irregularity to Jones, who thinks a ram's horn the ideal Line of Beauty. So that if we even succeeded in setting the cross lines all of a row—in itself a most doubtful undertaking—we should probably get our knuckles rapped for formality by some one, and publicly rebuked for our want of mathematical precision by some one else. There are a great many things to keep out of in this world of pitfalls and man-traps, but I do not think that any are more bristling with lancet-points and muzzle-tips than uncalled-for interference in homes and families, and the attempt to improve other people's ways according to our own ideas. And, indeed, Improvers are, as a race, awful nuisances; and I am sorry to be obliged to add, very frequently awful humbugs. And Humbug is a thing to keep out of, Heaven knows!

Is it too ungracious to say, keep out of unnecessary benevolences? I do not mean real kindnesses to be compassed even with large sacrifice of self and pleasure—I do not mean real self-immolation to be attained by grace and followed by good—but foolish little demands on our time and purse and energy for no adequate result—subsoil ploughings for no harvest better than a bundle of reeds or a bunch of thorns—taking one's brains and life-blood for the bricks and mortar of a friend's pleasant garden-house. Many people there are in this busy life of ours whose mission seems to be that of perpetual train-bearers to their friends and acquaintances. These are the people always at hand for whatever is wanted. Baby cannot cut its teeth, Jacky cannot have the rose-rash consequent on too much Christmas pudding, and Louisa cannot be invested with her first ball-dress and white satin slippers, without Miss Muchlove's presence and concurrence. Every event in the family—every birth, and death, and marriage, and change of season with its attendant routing out of ward-robes, every new servant, and every old bonnet—brings up Miss Muchlove from the depths of Camberwell (her titular home) at a vast expense of time, toilette, and omnibus hire; and no one thinks it too much to demand of her all her hours and half her income, to help them to settle the rags and jags of their untidy days. Of course Miss Muchlove might turn crusty if she so willed it; she is not chained and padlocked to subservience, and friendship is not like marriage, and can be flung overboard when becoming too weighty an inheritance; but, Lord bless that tender heart and soft head of hers! she is as incapable of resisting a request, even the most monstrous, as she is of heading a regiment, and finds no the most difficult monosyllable of the English language. Of course beggars must find givers, else the race would die out of existence altogether; and those who make demands on their friends' time and means must prove the trade not altogether unprofitable, else they would take counsel by Sisypus and ex-

perience, and leave off rolling stones up hill for the mere pleasure of seeing them return to their hands; and if the Miss Muchloves of the world would only learn to say No with half their present facility in saying Yes, there would be fewer trains left trailing in the streets, and fewer train-bearers found to hold them up at their own cost. We teach our daughters to say plums, prunes, and prism. If we would but teach them to say No in the right place, too!

There are people who are always being borrowed from and who are never repaid; people who do other people's shopping, advancing the purchase-money and having to find the cabs and portage, sometimes (instances of this are known to me) the purchase is disliked and thrown on the unhappy agent's hands, whether suitable or unsuitable to sex, age, and condition; there are people who travel weary miles on wild winter nights to help other people's children, when the lawful parents of the same are sleeping comfortably in their arm-chairs before the fire, blotting out Responsibility from their vocabulary: there are people who never belong to themselves but are always in the unpaid services of others, whose lives are, as it were, à l'obrok, and whose energies are farmed out for purposes not in any way reflecting good at home; and there are people who are invariably drawn into every disagreeable affair, and whose fingers are never out of the fire, whence they pluck burning chestnuts not for their own eating. Now this is the kind of thing surely to be kept out of!

Keep out of love if you can; keep out of hate, whether you can or no; keep out of inconstancy and the wish for double strings to your bow at the same time; keep out of the habit of being ears to the left and tongue to the right; keep out of this, and keep out of that; and whenever you are in doubt as to your course, keep out of it—when at least you will be safe.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER IX. A HOLLOW WORLD.

CAPTAIN FERMOR, very restless—destitute, as it were, as regards that pleasant sort of romance which used to be his daily food—was in a state of impatient hostility with the world in which he lived. On this very day, he had determined, himself, to go and spend a pleasant tranquil afternoon with Miss Manuel, and thus work the current clear. One of the *old* pleasant conversations—a conversation, that is, where *he* talked, and brought out the fine Arabian *ro eya*, now, alas! too long in stable.

That wild notion of her not seeing him, which presented itself to him as he walked, must have been a mistake or misconception. Perhaps—and it was the *ro eya* whispered this—perhaps she felt there was some of the *old* danger in these retired interviews, and was wary in exposing herself to risk. At this notion he smiled, and patted the Arabian's neck with fondness.

He was smiling as he was just turning into Alfred-place. He saw the balcony, and the flowers in the balcony; but he suddenly saw under the balcony a lady coming out on the steps. The lady wore a dress that he thought he knew, and a bonnet; and, looking closer, he remembered young Mrs. Fermor, his wife.

He was thunderstruck—speechless. This, then, was it. Ah! *this* explained it all. *Here* was the interference that had closed the door against him. With bitterness on his lips he turned away full of anger. "Upon my word, it has come to a pretty pass!"

He thought first of hurrying after her and convicting her in her "spy system" at once. But this seemed imprudent: he could not trust himself in the street. How was he to pay his visit? He was "upset"—not "in tone" to be smiling and fluent. It was always the way. Besides, he thought bitterly, the door was effectually closed *now*.

He walked away very fast, came through the Park, where the gay ribbons were still winding round, and the gaudy flags of fashion still flying. "All *here* should be *my* friends," he said; "*my* true sphere until I lost it." And he stood at the rail, and saw the thousand-and-one little boudoirs

on wheels pass him, now stopping, now going on. He knew everybody—by sight at least. The men perched high, driving spirited horses, and the young girls in the tiny boudoirs. Suddenly he started.

"I declare," he thought. "Old friends. I am so glad." And he was at the window of a little chamber in a moment.

These were some "Craven people," a mother and daughters, who lived in the purest fashionable air. Sojourned permanently in ball-rooms, and occasionally went out to their own home. To him they were always kind. He had leave to come in when he pleased, and at every dinner they gave, dined, as of course. They allowed him to do a hundred things for them—the best proof of fashionable intimacy and affection. Fermor's eyes lighted with complacent delight as he drew near to the window. He was thinking what a surprise for them.

At the same moment a tall gaunt man was raising his hat and approaching the window. There were smiles of welcome, three smiles of welcome, and three soft "O! Mr. Romaine's".

Fermor, a little disordered, said: "O Mrs. Craven! So glad, I am sure—"

The three faces looked at him. One, a younger and simpler face—she showed no scars as yet—said, softly:

"Mamma, Mr. Fermor! You know—"

"Ah, to be sure. How-de-do, Mr. Fermor? So long, you know—"

"O, Mr. Romaine! we have been *dying* to see you. Why didn't you come?"

The other girl, who was her mother's sergeant, said:

"Ah, you didn't care. I know *I* never missed you."

FERMOR. I am so glad, Mrs. Craven. I am sure I have been (this spoken a little sadly) all over the world since I saw you.

MRS. CRAVEN (with no curiosity). Indeed, O, of course.

FERMOR. It is so curious, meeting in this—
THE SERGEANT. You *won't* tell us? No? I said so to mamma. No you won't.

MR. ROMAINE (gently pressing on Fermor to the window). I beg your pardon—*would* you? Thanks! (Fermor, now behind, with only a glimpse of the boudoir, over a steep hill formed by Mr. Romaine's back.)

MISS CRAVEN (with a little pity for Fermor; but her voice does reach over the hill). Have you been quite well, Mr. Fermor?

FERMOR (glowing, raging, biting his lip, and not knowing what to do). Good morning, Mrs. Craven.

Three eager smiles are shaken at him like three white handkerchiefs, and he gets off the stage somehow. Looking back, he sees Mr. Romaine bent, as he leant on the carriage window, looking after him with a grim smile. If he had been near, he would have heard Mrs. Craven say, in answer:

"O, one of the girls' friends. Now, I am told he has picked up some low creature, and thinks he is to be all the same. It really is so disagreeable both for him, and for us!"

"Quite understand," said Mr. Romaine. "There are fellows who never take a hint."

That was a gloomy walk of Fermor's! "Heartless set," he said. "They might have recollected all I have done for them, and all the money they have cost me. I suppose they think nothing more is to be got now that I have"—and he laughed—"done for myself. They are no loss, at any rate."

Suddenly he thought of his relation, Sir Hopkins, whom he knew was in town, but whom he had never yet found time to go and see. Somehow he had rather shrank a little from this meeting, for he had not consulted him about this marriage. He was in. It was close on six o'clock, and Sir Hopkins was writing. He was still boring into the old diplomatic molehills—still burrowing, tunnelling, indefinitely. Only now, as he grew older, the molehills grew smaller and meaner, and the tunnels narrower. The awful whisper had even been heard in F. O. corridors that "old Pooch" was "gone by," and younger servants used the word "fogie." With reference to his last experiment it was said plainly and firmly: "You know he broke down. Lord Spendlesham insisted, and they had to give it to him. He was in one of his mulish fits—thought they were putting him off—and so fixed on this. He was very sorry for it afterwards, though."

When Fermor came in he was in a molehill, tunnelling away. Letters to one, letters to the other; to lords, to no lords; to official, to non-official. Was there a little pin, resting on a lever, which lay on another lever, which was one of a thousand other little levers, to move the great machine—he sent a letter to that pin. Was there a thread hanging down among a cloud of threads—was there a loose wire among a million of loose wires—was there a fly upon the great wheel—he addressed dismal letters to that thread, to that wire, and to that fly. He was still intriguing for office, as he had intrigued forty years before, that is, calling letters intrigues.

He looked up as Fermor entered, and looked down. His pen was in the middle of a sentence. "Sit down," he said; "excuse me." He wrote on for a minute or two, then stopped.

"Glad to see you," he said, coldly. "How have you been? Now what is it? What do you want me to do? I have no interest *now*, you know."

"I merely came to see you, sir," said Fermor.

"O, *that* was it," said the diplomatist, beginning to write again. "I have not been so well, lately. To tell you the truth," he added abruptly, "I am very busy, as you see, and——"

"O, certainly," said Fermor, rising, with a wounded air; "you need not stand on ceremony with me, sir."

Sir Hopkins looked at him a moment. "So you married, it seems. I dare say you find a change."

Fermor said, "How, sir?" a little doubtfully.

"Why, the life, the attention, the consideration. I know how soon *that* comes, unless you dazzle them with what you have done."

"I don't want to dazzle anybody," said Fermor, in some confusion.

"No; that was pretty plain," said the other. "No fear of *that*. 'Pon my soul, Charles, I had hoped better things of you; I had indeed. In plain words, you threw yourself away—you did. We would have made a man of you, if you had let us."

"Why, God bless me, sir," said Fermor, with great warmth. "Did you not advise me yourself? Did you not get with the father, and keep saying to me, 'There was a match?' Surely you remember?"

Sir Hopkins shook his head. "I am sorry to see this," he said. "You are only a novice after all. Why, couldn't you see that was all my foreign office business—setting up one girl to bring down the other?"

"And you *did* bring her down," said Fermor, bitterly. "I believe it had been better for me, after all, if I had cast my lot with one who loved me, and who, I believe, died for me, instead of being made the object of foreign office business, as you say."

"That was all a matter for your own choice," said Sir Hopkins, calmly. "But, to tell you the truth, I don't like this tone of discussion. On this occasion I think it right to tell you plainly, to prevent misconception hereafter"—and Sir Hopkins paused a little, and looked at him meaningly—"that I am not pleased. You have taken your course, and disappointed me; made what I can only call a low marriage, without connexion or rank. I don't like the transaction, and I say so, and I must add, never *can* like it. You understand?"

"Well, sir," said Fermor, with a wounded defiance, "it can't be helped. I am sorry for it."

"I don't care telling you now that it has been a disappointment, and a great one to me. I don't choose to be disappointed. I don't mind telling you now that I had a girl for you, ready and waiting—a girl out of our office. Such a connexion! Good God! What a fool you made of

yourself! Good-by, Charles. I am afraid I shall be very busy for the next few weeks."

Fermor came home, straight to his home, his cheeks tingling. "This is what I have brought myself to," he said, with utter bitterness and ruefulness. He was dreadfully mortified and wounded. He beat the rails impatiently with his cane as he passed by. Coming to his house, he went sadly into the drawing-room, where was young Mrs. Fermor waiting.

"Dinner is spoiled, Charles," she said, ringing the bell. "Three-quarters of an hour!"

He flung himself on a sofa. "What does it matter?" he said. "I am late for everything now. It is a wonder you waited for me."

She looked at him astonished.

"Yes," he went on, "why should any one take the trouble? I am not worth it. Everybody can treat me as they please, it would seem. Good gracious!" and he started up, "it seems like a conspiracy to mortify and humiliate me."

The young wife went up close to him, full of sympathy. "Dear Charles," she said, "tell me about your troubles. Indeed I feel for you. What is it? Who has hurt you?"

"Such treatment!" he went on, angrily. "Mrs. Craven, Sir Hopkins, and the rest of them! As if there was some mark on me. What do you suppose my crime is? Throwing myself away, they call it; making a low marriage."

Deeply hurt, and with deep reproach, she said: "O, Charles, you *cannot* mean this?"

"I don't mean it," he said; "but they all tell me so. The world is right, it seems. Else, why do they mortify and insult me at every turn, as if I had done a crime? It's not your fault, of course. I should, of course, be a monster to say so. But no man has paid so heavily as I have for any act of his life. There's Sir Hopkins, too, has hinted plainly he means to punish me, because he doesn't approve. The women in the Park will hardly deign to speak to me. Is not this pleasant? Delightful sauce to flavour one's dinner with!"

At this moment entered the stiff grim father, who, in this new shape of life, rarely seen, and emerging for meals from his secluded quarter on the stairs, was as grim, and rigid, and metallic as of old. The old casting was sharp and hard as ever.

He stood in the doorway a moment. Then, without a word, turned and went down. The others followed. It was a silent and solemn meal. A blank had fallen on them all. Fermor cut his food savagely and defiantly. At the end—Mr. Carlay never sat over wine, but was absorbed silently into his quarter—if Fermor was out, he came and read to his daughter. Now, at the end of dinner, when she was gone up to a dismal meditation by the fire, and Fermor was thinking of a lonely night walk just as dismal, the cast-iron figure said: "Would you wait a moment, Fermor? I want to speak to you."

A little surprised, the other came back.

"Take your seat again," said Mr. Carlay. "I

wish to say a few words to you seriously. It will save a good many more serious, later."

Fermor did not relish this magisterial tone, and perhaps on another occasion would have said something about this "solemn preface."

"Mary is not looking well," Mr. Carlay went on. "She is growing unhappy. I have remarked it for some time." He paused a second or two. "Are you as kind to her as you should be?"

Fermor started. "I should hope so," he answered. "Why should you ask me such a question?"

"As you ask me," said the other, "I will tell you. Because I begin to think you are not. People think because I live out of the world—as it were out of the house almost—that I see nothing, and know nothing. Never was there a greater mistake, if that be the impression that directs any particular course of conduct. I see everything, and know everything."

Often and often had Fermor laid it down at mess, and at other places where he, as it were, sat judicially, that anything like lecturship from a person in the relation that Mr. Carlay was to him, would be fatal. From the outset he had settled that such encroachment was to be resisted at once. He thought of this now.

"Whatever there is to see and know, you are welcome to," he said, calmly. "Perhaps, if you did mix a little more in human concerns, you would have truer views of things. I hope I behave as well as most husbands do. I know my duty, whatever complaints may have been made to you," he added, with some meaning.

Mr. Carlay was growing more grim, and dense, and hard every moment. His lips scarcely seemed to move as the words passed from them. "Look here," he said, "Fermor. I do not want to interfere with you; hitherto I have not done so. If you only hint it, you shall see even less of me than you have done. Those rooms up-stairs make up my world, and—my daughter. But I tell you this now—and I tell it to you solemnly—if I find the slightest change towards *HER*—here he stood up and seemed to grow in gaunt height into a stark prophet—"if she is not treated gently, tenderly, softly, even childishly—if she is not humoured and petted, and made the queen and darling of this house, as she has always been of mine, I declare there will come a change over me that you cannot dream of. You don't know me. You don't know what I can be, or what I have been. But I warn you now in time. Touch her, and you touch me. I am willing to be tranquil for this life, and go out of life peacefully, after all the storms I have passed through. But on another sign of what I have seen this evening, and I become what I would not become. You will rue the day. You are no match for me. Come now," he said, suddenly changing his tone, "you have sense and tact, and will take this in good part. But, believe me, nothing was

ever meant so much in earnest, or will so surely come to pass."

He left Fernor speechless, and really overpowered by this denunciation. The gaunt figure seemed to grow as it spoke. Its eyes flashed, and there was an air of undefined menace. Fernor knew not what to say or to reply, but felt his strange influence, and shrank away from collision with this wild being, whom he now saw in a new light. But he went forth upon the night in a storm of humiliation and passion, scarcely knowing what he was doing. He thought not so much of the degrading intimidation which had been tried on him that night, as of the unworthy "delation"—the complaint that must have been made by Mrs. Fernor—which he should register and never forgive. If the world was in a conspiracy against him, he had strength enough to do battle with it. But for *her*—she who had dared to behave in *that* way—he could not bring himself to think of it. With that violent and dangerous Carlay it would not do to quarrel openly, but to her he could mark it in a cold, cutting, quiet way that she should *feel*. So, when he came home that night again, there was upon him a new, formal, chill sort of manner, a kind of icicle politeness, under whose touch she seemed to wither away. She had an instinct what it came from, and with timidity tried to make some excuse or extenuation, but shrank away from his cold look of wonder and colder disclaimer. On this night a domestic Nemesis seemed to have entered into the house, and from this night it was steadily busy at its work.

CHAPTER X. CONSTRUCTING A WEB.

IN a day or two Miss Manuel's brougham was standing at the door of the "Irrefragable," and Miss Manuel herself inside, reflected in the highly-polished official mahogany.

Mr. Speedy had come specially from his box with yet more "irrefragable" literature, for the bright lady seemed to be an eager student of the little tables, and could not have enough of the supposititious A who had insured for one hundred pounds at the age of twenty-one years, and who in a surprisingly short time had come in for "bonuses," and other good things, to the amount of five or six times his policy. Not without interest, too, were the "fatal warnings" against improvidence. Miss Manuel still could not make up her mind.

"We should be delighted at any time," said Mr. Speedy, "at *any* time, to purchase up the policy at its full value."

"I know," said Miss Manuel, leaning on her round hand. "That would be charming. If poor Mrs. Carter could have done that," she added, smiling.

Mr. Speedy's brow contracted; he only liked dwelling on the bright side of the company's affairs. "We don't accept Major Carter's," he said, "as a pattern case. If we did, we might close. We do not consider that he has behaved

well in the transaction. But our practice is to shut our eyes to a certain extent, and maintain an 'irrefragable' principle."

"Where did poor Mrs. Carter die?" said Miss Manuel. "I knew them very well."

Mr. Speedy, not at all displeased to be seen by the office on terms of agreeable familiarity with a "fine woman," became almost confidential.

"At an out-of-the-way place," he said, "Bangor; and in, it seems, an out-of-the-way part of Bangor. We had a scarcely recognised agent there—a postmistress, I think—and we never dreamed of business in such a place. However, we received the proposal, and the Board accepted it. After the receipt of the second premium we received the claim. We made inquiries, but everything seemed regular. We trusted to those local doctors—a system I have always set my face against. It was, of course, a damaged Life at the beginning."

"But when I knew her," said Miss Manuel, "she was quite healthy and quite strong. O, it must have been a sudden thing, I assure you. Poor Mrs. Carter!"

This was the third time she had called the deceased lady "poor," and Mr. Speedy looked at her a little earnestly. The bright lady looked at him unsuspiciously. ("There was something in her eyes," said Mr. Speedy, at dinner that day, pursuing his narrative to Mrs. Speedy, "about her eyes so strange and odd.") He looked round to see were the clerks listening. Suddenly the doors were flapping like heavy mahogany wings, and a gay gentleman came up—to be reflected in the world of mahogany.

"Well! here I have come again," he said. "You can't tire me. A large stock of patience on hand—a reserve fund, like yours."

Miss Manuel turned round and knew the voice. "Major Carter!" she said. It was Major Carter, but he was altered. The gay young manner, which lay on him like a bloom, was dried off; he was not so bright, or, perhaps, so clean, and he had a sharper and more earnest manner. He started with astonishment and some confusion as he saw her and Mr. Speedy bent together over the counter.

"Miss Manuel!" he said. "So glad. Been well, I hope? But—er—why *here*?" he added, with a sort of sneering tone. "Ladies don't go round to Life offices as they do shopping, eh?"

Mr. Speedy, who had been scanning him coldly, and did not relish his interview being interrupted, said now: "It is no use coming until the full Board meets again. I told you so, Major Carter, before."

"O, quite right, quite right," he said, hastily; "I was only passing and looked in. And so you are at this sort of thing? And why the 'Irrefragable' No better office, of course," he added, hastily. "It is melancholy to be obliged to think of such things, and to have vile profit associated with those whose memory we love.

But what can you do? Grown up sons, Miss Manuel, and a *little* extravagant. Ah, *I* can't treat myself to such a pure luxury as feeling."

Miss Manuel was looking at him steadily. "I was sorry to hear it," she said, "very sorry. So sudden, too. It must have been a great trial."

"It was a blow," he said, "a trial to us all. But, after all, we were prepared for it. She had been ailing a long time; O dear yes! That is," he added, hastily, "when I say a long time, I mean within a year. You are now in town? Ah, so glad! After all, poor Eastport; though, indeed, I know it brought us all our troubles. Indeed I felt for you. Must go now. Good-by. Morning, Mr. Speedy!"

With lip that fluttered nervously, the bright lady looked after him as the heavy door swung to and fro, as it were, in a rage. For a quarter of an hour more she and Mr. Speedy talked together; then the brougham drove away. As she swept round the corner, she saw the figure of Major Carter looking about cautiously. Her face flashed up. "It is beginning. It is coming!" she said. "In time the Lord will deliver them all into my hands. It is written on his face."

There *was* something written on Major Carter's face—at least, a different writing from the old light and careless hand familiar to all at Eastport. There, every day, a hundred gay little "devices," as airy and nonsensical as the mottoes in bon-bons, were to be read. Now, there was a serious, "legend," written in contracted characters. He turned away hastily when he saw her.

She went home in a sort of elation. Life was beginning to have a zest. Often and often there had come great gaps and blanks, when all hope and interest, and even consciousness of life, had left her; when time and life and the gay things of the gay world round her, seemed only a long white monotonous reformatory gallery, with barred grates and windows—as dreary, as hopeless, as prostrating. She had nothing to live for. She was oppressed with the chilling blankness of loneliness. But *now* she was beginning to apprehend life, and the scattered objects of life were striking on her senses, for she was living, breathing, and moving towards a purpose.

As she drove up to her own door, she found a figure standing on the steps. It was Fermor—the outlawed Fermor, as he almost seemed to be now. This image fitted harmoniously with all that was in her mind. He saw her drive up with one of his bitter "sore" smiles upon his mouth.

"I should have come a little later," he said, "and been received with the usual answer. The next thing, I suppose, will be, you will tell me with your own lips that you are not at home."

"The Lord," thought the inner Miss Manuel again, "will in full time deliver all into my hands." But the outer Miss Manuel, leaning on his arm to get out of her carriage, said, with bright eyes and soft encouragement, "I can see

you are aggrieved about something. Come in. No, I know you will not. I must be punished and made to feel."

Fermor walked up-stairs after her. She was never looking more dazzling than at that moment. What she had been thinking of had sent additional sparkles from her eyes. She was thinking how fast the fly was coming to the web—coming, too, of its own wish, not to be kept out from the web—with a foolish eagerness to be caught. To *him*, this brilliance—a brilliance set off by dress, and choice of colour in dress—was almost confounding; and the feeling in his mind was a secret wonder how *this* had never struck him before in the old Eastport days. As he sat opposite to her on Mr. Romaine's "low chair," he looked and looked again, and marvelled at what cloud had been between *his* eyes and her.

He was full of his grievances, and ready with indignant protest: but, as he looked, he began to soften. They fell into the category of those little outrages and insults which were a delightful and welcome little armoury for him in drawing-rooms.

"I am getting so used," he said, plaintively, "to hard knocks from all sides, that nothing comes upon me now as a surprise. I am persecuted for justice' sake. You, of course, only follow the crowd."

"Yes," said she, gaily, "I am now of the world, worldly. It is the only true course. Sentiment, scruples, delicacy, consideration, and the rest of it, is all waste of time and unprofitable. *A la guerre, comme à la guerre.* In the world, why not *as* the world?"

"Just what I thought," he said. "I have not lost my old power of judgment, though I suppose people say it is dulled. You are now sought and courted, and I suppose flattered. Every one that comes, pays, I suppose, for his welcome by some coin of this sort. You relish it every day more and more, and do not care for those who come unfurnished, or do not care to furnish themselves. I am not skilled in *that* sort of thing. *Once*, perhaps, I could do it as well as any of them."

Her eyes fell on the ground. Her voice became low, and soft, and plaintively musical. "I thought *you* understood me. You, who know the world by heart, should make allowance for some of that rouge and patches which we must all put on. *Once*, indeed, I knew life, and fell into its ways, but that was long, long ago, down at poor Eastport."

His eyes fell on the carpet too. "Ah! I begin to think those were very happy times," he said, sighing; "happier than will soon come again." He did not see how she was looking at him, nor did he know how she was thinking how much faster Nemesis was walking than she had calculated. "Yes," he went on, "I often think of it—I do indeed—of your pleasant home, and the life we spent together." (He, in fact, often did, for there had been an excitement and un-

certainly in the life, which had made it adventurous and agreeable to think of.) "I do not expect that you have yet learned to judge me fairly, but you will in time, I am sure."

A pang shot across her face. "Of course," she said, hastily. "As I said, we were all victims of circumstances. I could make allowance. I saw what engines were set at work. Someway, I cannot bring myself to talk of these things with the quiet indifference I ought. But every day I am learning, and *shall* learn. The world is a delightful master."

"I like to talk of old times," he said; "it has a sort of soothing effect. At home they do not understand these things. I can get no one to understand them. Practically, I am a stranger there. *You* understand me. I should like now and again to talk with you over such matters. But they are too pastoral and unsubstantial. The worldlings, it seems, and the flatterers, have stronger claims."

He was determined to force himself into the web. His foot was on the outer thread.

"How you misjudge me," she said, in the sweet key her voice sometimes sang in. "I am as you—we are strangely like—lost in a crowd of friends who are not friends. There is a tumultuous crowd pressing round me, and yet I am alone—as if I was in a desert. These pleasant airy chattering men, so light and gay, what do you suppose *they* can do but chill my heart? With you I could have sympathy. We are in the same tone. I could gradually come to know you better and better, and find a soothing comfort, as you say, in talking over old times, but—but—"

Greatly interested, Fermor said, hastily, "But what—why not tell me?"

She shook her head. "No, no, I have reasons. Better for me to keep in my present groove—go on as I have gone on. Forgetfulness, coldness, heartlessness, indifference—these are the medicines for me. I should have nothing near me like sympathy, manliness, generosity, love, nor appreciation. No, no. Now you will understand what seemed ungracious—what you took for barring of doors against you! I thought you would have understood me better. So, I say, better cross over the street, and leave me on my own pathway."

Bewildered by this speech, and strangely interested, Fermor was not ready with a reply. Suddenly came pouring in the hollow world, the pleasant set who sat round Miss Manuel: critics, biographers, bishops, wits, and the rest.

He went his way in a strange exhilaration. After all, here was the old charm at work still. There was something strangely piquant about her. She made him talk as others did not make him talk. She was full of genius, and of the dramatic sense.

But there was a soft mystery about her last words—a pleasant confusion—above all, a compliment to *him*, in that persistent exclusion, that was welcome. He was pleased to find himself re-

habilitated, and he walked with dreams floating before him—the old dreams of vanity and complacency. Work had been resumed with the censors.

SOMETHING ABOUT CRETE.

WHEN the writer of this was a boy, he used to be very fond of looking at an old quarto edition of Tournefort. Such quaint woodcuts! Women of Scio in gala dress, with something about their heads like a sack tied up at each end, such trim jackets, and short petticoats, and square stomachers looking for all the world like a newspaper stuck over the bosom; or the Naxiotes, with more elaborate toilette, fan in hand, and wearing a strange quilted sort of external crinoline. It is amusing to see how much space this grave "Doctor of Medicine and of the Faculty of Paris," &c. &c., devotes to female costume. For instance, he says: "The ladies of Myconos would be by no means ungraceful if their dress was somewhat less ridiculous;" and, taking them as the typical fashionables of the Archipelago, he gives three pages of woodcuts containing every individual thing they wear. "The dress," he tells us, "is expensive" (the embroidered aprons and chemisettes certainly have a costly look); "but it *lasts a lifetime*." Such engravings are a great relief to the pictures of weedy-looking plants which form the staple of Tournefort. What was, perhaps, more interesting than anything about dress or manners, was the following: "Delos is uninhabited; the people of Myconos rent it of the Grand Signior for twenty crowns a year, and use it as a sheep-walk." What profanation! Why not form a settlement in the sacred island? Twenty crowns! A mere peppercorn rent! Thought we, if ever we have the chance, we will be off to the Archipelago, outbid the men of Myconos, and settle for life in the sacred centre of "the Isles of Greece." We suppose we never had the chance; for here we are still.

But we love the Greek Islands still, and have maintained a reading acquaintance with all of them. Let us take Crete first. It is the largest; it has more of a modern history than most of the rest. The Venetians held it for over five hundred years, and wherever the Lion of St. Mark has been, there is always something worth telling; indeed, history can count few more heroic defences than that of Morosini, in 1668. Then Crete, too, had its war of independence in 1820, when all the Greek race was up in arms, and when, but for diplomacy, they would have won the whole *Ægean*, if not Constantinople itself. The Candiotes had made a most successful rising. They had plenty of wrongs to avenge: the Cretan "Turks" were mostly apostate Greeks, and displayed the usual bitterness of renegades against their countrymen and quondam co-religionists. They were a turbulent race, who pretty well set the Porte at defiance, and who, to the ordinary Mussulman

vices, added that of drunkenness, which (be it known) is one of the besetting sins of Greeks. Yes, Mr. Teetotaler, the glorious Hellenes justify their claim to be true descendants of the men who kept the Dionysia. They are, in more senses than one, the Irish of Eastern Europe. Think of that when next you are temperately tempted to deery "the stolid English working man as the most besotted member of the European family." There may be some truth after all in the good old notion that a people's intellect and energy vary directly as the quantity of strong drink they consume—the Scotch being at one end, the Portuguese at the other of the spirituous and *spiritual* scale. The Greek would make a very good second to the Scotchman; and the renegade Cretan, when he swore by Allah, and set up a harem, left off neither his strong Greek wine nor his stronger brandy.

Many of the shocking outrages which led to the war of independence were committed by men maddened with drink. In this war the Greeks at first got much the best of it. They had quite driven the Turks out of the open country, and had stormed half the fortified places in the island, when Mehemet Ali (how every Philhellene lates the name!) came to the rescue of his suzerain, so sore bested; and several Egyptian regiments, veteran troops, accustomed to pitiless warfare in Upper Egypt, were landed in Candia. They soon turned the tide; but the "insurgents" were not by any means put down; Crete is a difficult island to conquer thoroughly; the valleys where the Sfakiotes and other tribes live are so lost among a confused mountain system, that a few resolute men who know the country can keep armies at bay. However, it was no use fighting without backers, and the protocol of London in 1830, which gave independence to the mainland of Greece, handed over Crete to its old slavery.

The cruelty on both sides in the war of independence, was what we call Asiatic; such, at any rate, as we have no modern examples of in Western Europe. One day a Turk, sole survivor of some band that had been cut off in the mountains, came rushing, hot and weary, into a Christian village. All the men were out, some on the war trail, others tilling the ground; and so he ventured to look into a house and beg a little water. He got what he asked for; but the news had gone abroad that an enemy was in the place, and the women (like a set of Jaks) fell upon him while he slept, and hacked him to pieces with wood-cleavers. So terrified, indeed, were the Turks at the idea of falling into Christian hands, that they preferred dying in heaps, of famine and disease, in their strong places, to surrendering to their ruthless enemies. They deserved to be hated: their rule in the isle had been utterly lawless. Property, wives, daughters, all the Candiotes, had held subject to the caprice of the Turkish boys. When we find the modern Greek deficient in certain commercial or social virtues, let us reflect on the

training he has had. The wonder is, that the nation should have preserved any vestige of national life; but for their religion, the Greeks must have ceased to exist long ago. Fancy work like this going on unchecked.—A certain baker at Khanea has a very pretty wife, of whom he takes special care, never letting her set foot outside his own premises. The Turks hear of her, and are piqued at never being able to catch sight of her. At last one of the wildest of the boys forms his plan. He calls at the baker's shop, and says, "I'm going to bring a lot of friends to-night to supper; have one of your famous cakes ready, and let there be no stint of wine and brandy." "Your excellency shall be obeyed," says the man, bowing to the ground. He suspects nothing, for it was usual with those Turks who still had a little regard for appearances, to keep their wine out of the way of wives and households, and to come to an inn or to a Christian's shop for a periodical debauch. They all come, and, sitting down on the floor, begin drinking. The man is going off to give his cake a last turn, when they roar, "Bring up your wife to wait on us." In vain he protests, and vows she is not in the house. "If you don't do as you're told, we'll kill you, and then search the place." The wretch brings in his poor wife, and rushes off to answer a loud knock at the door. He opens it, and instantly falls pierced with the daggers of some dozen renegades, who, leaving him dead in the street, go in, bar the door, and join their comrades. What befel the miserable wife, left helpless amid these infuriated monsters, is something too shocking even to think of. No inquiry whatsoever was made about the outrage; none of the guilty were brought to punishment. It is some consolation to think that the Candiotes did not forget them. Such ruffians (and there were many like them) were always marked men, and, when the war of independence began, they stood the very smallest chance of escaping. Not the boys only, but the men in authority, set all justice and humanity at defiance. The headman of a village, a Turk who was nearly always mad drunk, heard that the belle of the place was going to be married to a fine handsome young neighbour. In a sudden freak he sends for the girl and her father, "to congratulate them on the approaching wedding." They come to the aga's house. While they are talking, six strong Turks fall on the father, and, carrying him out, leave him, well bastinadoed, by the wayside.

By-and-by, the Turk leaves the dishonoured girl, and, mounting his horse, rides with half a dozen of his spahis furiously along the highway, to work off the fumes of drink. He meets the girl's betrothed coming up from the next town, loaded with presents for the wedding, and deliberately shoots him through the head. He is never brought to trial. Truly we cannot wonder at cruelties on the side of the Greeks! The only wonder is that Crete, which made so heroic a stand, should have been once more given up to Turkish misrule, and that we, who let Poland go, who suffered Denmark to

be dismembered, who gave up Hungary in '49 for want of a stroke of the pen, should have shed our blood like water in the Crimean war, to maintain in Europe a race which will always act as its forefathers acted, whenever it dares. "The Turk never changes." And yet here have we been fighting for him; nay (more wonderful still), here are we now lending him money, bolstering up his loan, planning public works for him, as if he were a bona fide member of the European family!

If the Greeks gave no mercy in their struggle for independence, they got no mercy. The story of the cave of Melidoni, on the skirts of the Cretan Ida, has been told several times. It may be new to some readers. They will find it given at length in Notes of Travel in Crete, by G. Perrot: two fresh and interesting papers in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, for February and March last. Melidoni is one of those great stalactite caverns, like the famous Antiparos grotto, or our own Cheddar cave, which abound in most limestone formations. The softer part of the rock has got melted out by the action of water—there must always have been plenty of water where there are caverns—and so a space is left, more or less extensive, which soon gets adorned with limestone icicles, and pillars, and "organ pipes," and great "curtains" hanging from the misty roof, and "loaves of bread," and "a larder full of geese," and all the other names which the fancy of guides affixes to stalactites. Of course, when the war broke out, these caverns were great places of refuge for the patriots. They put wives and children there for safety. The vast quarries, for instance, identified by travellers with the Labyrinth of Minos, were held by a strong party. The Turks never dared to attack them. The party at Melidoni were not so fortunate. Three hundred and more took refuge there in the summer of 1822; most of them were old men, women, and children, with just a few strong men to guard the narrow entrance. At one place near the mouth the roof is so low that you have to creep along on all fours. The three hundred had provisions, and would have stood a long siege, had not the Turks (forestalling the Duke of Malakoff) got a lot of wood and straw together, and lighting it one windy day, managed to fill the cave with dense smoke. The poor Christians ran into the furthest recesses, but the smoke followed them, and not one of the three hundred ever saw daylight again. The cowardly besiegers lay for over a fortnight outside, fearing an ambuscade. At last they made a prisoner go in and "report;" even after his asseveration, they wait three days longer, and then go in and strip the slain. Soon afterwards, six Greeks came to visit Melidoni; they had put their wives and little children here to be out of harm's way. We can imagine the wretched men's feelings when the three who had gone in, brought word to the others who kept watch outside, what was the state of things. Two of them never recovered the shock, one dying at once, the other in a week. The

Greeks afterwards got possession of the whole district, and held a solemn funeral service in the cave, where the bones still lie on the floor, getting encased in the fast-growing stalagmite. We might tell many tales of wanton atrocity on both sides, but a more gratuitously barbarous deed than this was never wrought during the whole war. Let us hope that the island had never been the scene of such a horrible deed since the days of King Minos and the Minotaur, with his tale of human victims and the strange "man of bronze," Talos, who would seem, from a half-worn-out inscription, to have been worshipped (very probably with human sacrifices) at this very cave.

Little thought old Tournesfort of what a tragedy this Melidoni, which he tried to see and could not, would be the scene. He gives us an amusing instance, in relating how he was baffled here, of the "Cretising" (alas! in plain Saxon it means lying—we remember St. Paul to Titus) of the Candioté papa, and the bullying of the Turkish woywode. It seems to have been a concerted plan between them to extort money from the Frenchmen, who wanted to look at the cave with its inscription, and who were also anxious to see how the gum Ladanum is gathered. After getting three crowns out of them, one for himself, two for the Turk, the papa takes them to the Ladanum mountains, where they see men in shirt and drawers drawing a machine like a hay-rake, with a double row of leather thongs instead of teeth, over the short strong-smelling shrubs with which the ground is covered. The work has to be done in the heat of the day, and when there is no wind to cover the plants with dust. The hay-rake is an improvement on the old plan described by Theophrastus: "The Ledon used to be scraped from the hair and beards of goats which had been browsing on the plants from which it exudes." His other wish Tournesfort is unable to gratify; perhaps he does not bube enough; perhaps there is really some superstition connected with the spot, and making it "dangerous to the state" for a Ghiaour to visit it. Anyhow, he records the delight with which he afterwards found the inscription in Guter, and "so discovered in the midst of Paris what baffled me in the island itself." Tournesfort, like most of the writers of his day, accepts the Turks as an inevitable necessity, merely occasionally noticing their one virtue, their honesty. "A Turk convicted of theft is strangled in prison, that he may not bring disgrace on the Mahomedan name; he is then stitched up in a sack full of stones and flung into the sea." Their punishments are very cruel. We used to read and re-read, with morbid horror, the details of impaling, and of the gancle—a way of drawing a man up by a pulley to the top of a high scaffold, and then letting him drop down on a huge hook, from which he hung by whatever part of his body the hook may have caught. "Men linger for three days now and then, and sometimes are so callous as to ask passers-by for a cigar." Impaling was most dreaded; it was mainly practised on Cretan exiles who had settled

in small islands near, and who were encouraged by the Venetians to make piratical descents on Candia. One of these, when taken prisoner, offered a bag of gold if he might choose some other form of death: the stern pasha impaled him with his bag of money about his neck. The idea of an independent Greece was not matured a hundred and fifty years ago. Tournesfort never mentions the subject, though he excuses the drunkenness of the Candiotas, "because they drink to forget their misery."

Things are better now; the war of independence did a great deal of good to the island: it taught the Greeks their strength, and made the Turks respect them. The Candiotas does not now cower before his Mussulman ruler, as does the rayah of Roumelia. The medjlis, or mixed councils, now universally established through Turkey, are not a mere farce in Crete, as they are in many places; the Christian assessors venture to assert their opinion, though it be contrary to that of the Turks. All this looks better. Yet there is of course a great deal to be done to repair the evils which the slow action of a detestable government (far more fatal than the ravages of war) has caused. The people have too often become unthrifty and idle; what was the use of looking forward to tomorrow, or of repairing anything, when the Turk might come any day and take it all? Hence the grand forests, the old glory of Crete, are sadly diminished; no one planted to supply the waste of reckless usage; we hear of a great fire which went on burning for three years, no one having energy to put it out. Hence the villages, of *white marble*, are *schilencashed* by the very men who have the ruins of Gortyn and Cnidos before them, and who are children of those who built those famous cities. Under Turkish rule, man ceases to master nature, and becomes her slave. Crete of the hundred cities, with its teeming population, its aqueducts, roads, temples, is sadly changed now. Talk not of progress, so long as you are in the Aegean. But the people showed in those five years after 1820 that there is some of the old heroic blood in them still. They are worthy of freedom; how can they get it? That is what everybody asks who looks at a map of Turkey in Europe, or reads in the newspaper some fresh instance of Turkish barbarism and imbecility. Crete, above all places, should be free; for Crete is the land of legends, the cradle of the myth, the nursery of Zeus. Can nothing be done for it? Must it always remain bound to the Mezentian carcase of Islam? They tell us that the Ottoman Empire will soon be shorn of its European provinces; does that mean that the islands will go too? Or will the Candiotas begin to agitate more or less peacefully, like the Ionian Islanders, until it is found expedient to give them their freedom? M. Perrot (in the *Revue*) strongly advises a peaceful change. He says: "Buy up land as fast as you can. Oust the Turks by superior wealth and intelligence. Till properly what you buy; your soil does not produce the tithe of

what it might. Then, when you are masters of every acre in the isle, it won't matter much whether you pay your taxes to Stamboul, or to Athens. Under the Porte you may get to be as independent by-and-by as the Samians are."*

This is a low view to take of the case: there is no allowance here for Greek pride and Greek feeling, or for the love of nationality. Historically, M. Perrot is right though. Greek nationality was always very weak; it just held the majority of the states together against the Persians, and that was all. Greece went down before Rome, because it had nothing but a rope of sand to oppose to that ever-growing mass which sucked into itself all the powers it conquered. If modern Greeks feel as their forefathers felt, there is no fear of their breaking their hearts about nationality. Anyhow, they must keep quiet now, and not fight till there is a general *mélee* in Europe. It did very well in 1820, when all Greece was in commotion, and when all Europe was looking on approvingly. But modern politics run in a new channel; we in England, above all, favour the Turk. Crete could not stand alone; and bravely as the Sfakiotes and other mountaineers would fight, hardy and enduring as they are, they would have to give in at last, for the Turks have a steam fleet, and could throw any number of troops on a given point in a few hours. Yet, despite their fondness for that glorious Malvoisie which the Venetians prized so much, and against which the Turks found the precepts of the Koran of little avail, the Cretans are hardy and abstemious—capable (like Greeks in general) of living on very little. Tournesfort remarks this. Speaking of their mutton, which is all skin and bone in the winter, because, being bad farmers, they have no hay, and have to keep their beasts alive on the sedges by the sea-side, he says: "There is a proverb that a Greek will grow fat where even a donkey would starve; and verily I, M.D., Conseiller du Roy, and Reader in Medicine at the Royal College, am astonished to see how well many of them look, who, I know, live almost wholly on roots."

HAND OR BUSH?

WHICH is the better—the bird in the hand or the two in the bush?—to be content with the inadequacy we have secure, or the sufficiency we may never attain?—to make a minnikin roast of the one small bird in our hand, or to try for a pie with the two in the bush? Who can say? It is a question which, like most other questions, has two sides to it and a head and a tail; it is not to be settled off-hand, as one would square out a crooked line, arbitrarily and without appeal, by a perfectly adjusted T. Indeed, it involves the whole coil of chance and daring, and when loosing sail to brave the wide sea is wise, and when holding on to the narrow harbour is wiser still. The wide sea has the chance of a cargo of oil in it,

* They are governed by their own prince, and even have a flag of their own.

with a deeper dredging of pearls and coral; but it has also the chance of shipwrecks, and water-spouts, and foundering in mid-channel, of beating to pieces on sullen sand-bars, and of hurling in desperate destruction against stubborn rocks. The narrow harbour, on the contrary, is poor and strait. There is not a shell on its shores, there is not a pearl in all its oysters—and there are not many oysters at the best, with pearls or without; its coasts are flat, the trees are dwarfed, and the corn-fields scant and ragged; there is no beauty in all its borders, and no wealth in all its width; but then it is safe and certain; and poor as is the food to be found in its dull waters, it is food fit for human use, say what you will, and keeps the bolt shot against starvation. The haud or the bush? Safe stowage and a narrow margin for pleasure, gain, or beauty—or a potentiality of pearls and shipwreck, by no means unlikely? Of the two, which?

Who among us knows what were the words that wisdom whispered in our ears, until after the event? We can all see clearly enough the road travelled over, and it costs few of us any trouble—is, indeed, rather a favourite exercise than not—to point out where John fell, and James tripped; and why Richard lost his way, the coward! being frightened at molehills, which he swore were mountains; and how William went supperless to bed, making for an old scarecrow in the fields which he mistook for the bush above the inn door, and so missing wine and aim and shelter all at a blow. Post-dated criticism on our neighbours' actions is as easy as the alphabet; but how about pilotage? When the mists hang thick and the rain falls fast, and when the lengthening evening shadows distort all they touch, who can walk in the unknown land with such confidence as to be sure that nothing will betray him into danger or lure him into ciring? No one. With the wisest it is only hope and the nice calculations of the keen-eyed; it can never be certainty and the knowledge of the approved, until the ground has been gone over and the measuring-tape rolled up.

And small blame to those who, forsaking the mean actual, go after the grander ideal, with all sails set, with banners flying, with trumpets blaring, and wild eyes strained upward to the heaven they seek to scale in a two-horsed chariot, silver bright, and hot as love and zeal can make it! Had we not these, where would be our heroes and our poets, our saints and our martyrs, our demi-gods drinking nectar with the Son of Chronos, and our apostles calmly giving themselves to the death which was the world's life? What was in their hands?—the bird of safety, ease, the world's esteem and woman's love, of children playing round their knees, and of honours lasting for a lifetime; and what did they see in the green bush beyond? They saw the realisation of the Divine Law and the regeneration of the sons of men; they saw the holiness of a world and the love of God; they saw the life which knows no death, the beauty which can never fade, the glory that has no decay, the peace which passeth not away;

all this they saw in the green bush beyond the homestead, and they let go what they had, to compass, if they could, what they hoped. Shall we blame them? No; to them at all events the greater possible was the truth, and to have held on to the smaller actual would have been the lie.

Sometimes, too, the temptation of the chance is so overpowering that we should be more than men did we refrain from letting the plain brown hen escape while making a clutch at those two gold and silver pheasants strutting along the hedge-row, quite within grasp as it would seem. Gold and silver pheasants quite within grasp are not so plentiful as hedge-row bearings, that we should let them wander on unquestioned; and plain brown hens, laying their one egg daily, are to be had at every barn-door, and are, therefore, not such wonderful possessions, judging of value by rarity. True, they lay their one egg daily, which makes an omelette whereby the hungry can live; but the soul soon sickens of its eternal omelette, and the feathers of the gold and silver pheasants sparkle in the sun radiantly. What if the eggs were of the same? The chance, to souls sickened of the Dorking omelette, is worth something! And yet how often that chance turns out to be a mere delusion and a snare, and poor old Brownie would have been the better portion after all! It was such a hen as this which young Lightfoot let escape, when he gave up his clerk's stool—which at least had its legs of bread-and-butter certain, though the butter was thin and only Dorset—for the chance of promotion in India, that land of gold and silver pheasants and all rare fruits and flowers to boot. The bird in the hand flew away never to be recaptured, and the two stately pheasants in the bush just winked at young Lightfoot knowingly, then spread their wings and soared aloft, and left him with his nose to the grindstone and his feet in the stocks, a spectacle for gods and men to pity or deride, according to their humour.

So with Miss Clarissa Manlove. Clarissa had a good fat Dorking (what matter if the word looks like donkey on paper?) in serviceable leash, when the greatest brewer for twenty miles round made her the offer of his house and heart, if she would share the one and join hands over the other. Clarissa's father was not a man of many omelettes, nor yet of roasts as daily food; and the silly young woman might have feathered her nest and furnished the spit for the rest of her natural term, had she but accepted the brewer's friendly offer. But she refused, flying at higher game forsooth. For who but Cashbox, the rich banker's handsome son, had danced with her four times in succession last week at the County ball, and called her a houri at the end? (Cashbox had been in the East, he said; his friends said for him that he had only gone through a severe course of Layard and the Arabian Nights.) Cashbox was a golden pheasant ten thousand strong; and the respectable brewer with the small eyes and the heavy jawl had not one-twentieth that weight; still, he was

well enough, and to Clarissa and her household was as a fragrant Plutus daily rising from his steaming vats. But Miss Clarissa suffered herself to be tempted and led astray. She balanced her books carefully; but, unable to hedge, set her all on the gold, and came out at the wrong end—nowhere! Cashbox had as much thought of marrying her as of marrying his mother's pretty maid. She was all very well—and he had a great regard for her—and she was a nice girl, with no nonsense about her—a fine dashing sparkling brunette, who danced like an angel, and flirted like a woman—but one's favourite partner for a polka or the Schottische is not always the wife of one's choice: and so poor Miss Clarissa found to her enduring grief. For the week after she had let her homely Dorking fly, on the chance of snaring the peacock in the hedge, young Cashbox formally announced his engagement with Miss Much-aere of Muchaere, who, in her turn, might have flown at the peerage ogling her from behind the hedge, but who was wise in her generation; preferring to hold what she had rather than risk the loss both of what she had and of what she hoped.

What was it but the realisation of the same saw when that wrong-headed and conceited jackanapes Penny, the Author, as he was always proclaiming himself—as if authors were black swans in these inky days, and not plentiful as blackberries or house-sparrows—well! was it not letting slip the bird in the hand, when he refused the one hundred pounds actually offered for his wretched novel, vowing he would take nothing under four times that sum, at lowest? He knew of a certain person, he said, who had praised and appraised his rubbish and who had counselled him to “stand out;” so he did stand out. And to this day his novel lies in the right-hand drawer of his study-table, unbought, unpublished, and unknown! and likely to remain so.

Raphael Maulstick did the same thing, poor fellow, when he refused the dealer's hard bargain, and stood his chance on the Exhibition. It was a hard bargain, no doubt, and yet it was better than none; and so Mrs. Raphael thought when the Hanging Committee returned a polite rejection, and the chance was lost. The empty cupboard soon held only the ghosts of hunger and poverty; and when the children cried for bread, there was nothing for them but their father's paint-box, and the Last Supper done in oils: but not after Da Vinci. The dealer's seven pounds ten would at least have paid for bread; but now—both had gone—both that ugly, disappointing, little bird in the hand, and those other glorious visions in the bush, of academic acceptance, loud public notice, and a lumping sum of gold at the end, enough to cover the canvas an inch thick. Alas! alas! that pleasant dreams should have so mean a waking!

Sometimes though, it is good policy to loose the fingers cramped over a tinmouse to try after the capture of a fine fat partridge feeding in the stubble. This is the puzzling part

of it. If it were always wisest to hold on—well! we should know the proper course to take on all occasions; and if it were always the better thing to try for the higher game, then the world would spend its days in devising landing-nets and fowling-pieces, and in bringing the act of capture to the highest point of perfection. But as it is sometimes the one and sometimes the other, who on earth knows what to do for certain, and when the right hand holds the key of success, and when the left? There was old Hunks now:—he bowed and scraped his son into an appointment in the Post-office, and thought he had got round to the back of a miracle, no less, when he had done it. As it was, the young fellow was as unfit for his work as if he had been born with stiff knees and made to sit cross-legged. He knew nothing of routine work, and cared nothing for the Post-office; indeed, he thought letter-writing a mistake, and her Majesty's mails might have all foundered between the Mausion House and St. Martin's-le-Grand for anything he would have cared. His soul was in an engine-room, with its arms up to the elbows in steel-filings and railway-grease; that was where his delight lay, and nothing else could have satisfied him. Still, the Post-office was a certainty, and its foundations were of very solid masonry, while the engine-room was only a possibility, and might be a mere castle in the clouds, turning to rain and melting away into mist when sought to be furnished and inhabited. Yet it was such a cherished possibility to him!—such a pleasant brace of cockatoos hiding behind the hedge. If he could but lay a little salt on their tails and bag them without more ado! At all events he would try. So he gave up the Post-office, stripped off his coat, and went at it. And though he was old for his work, still he was young for his hope, and in energy too, and of the nature that enjoys a hunt after hedge birds. It did not take him long to master the great problem; and when I last heard of him he had caught a whole row of blackbirds—four-and-twenty of them they said—out there in Spain, where he was sent an engineering to the satisfactory oiling of his chariot wheels. “Every one has not his luck,” grumbled young Lightfoot, with his nose still at the grindstone. Just so; but then every one has not his energy, his perseverance, or his skill, and is not already consecrate by nature to a neat-handed salt-laying on the tail of the great bird Success.

The same kind of thing befel Bounty. Bounty was taken on at Jones's, to teach the little boys their Gradus ad Parnassum, at a yearly salary representing as many banyan days as there are days in the year. Bounty's hand just once closed over that unfledged crow, and then flung it away in disdain. A certain pair of nightingales sat in the bay-tree beside him, and they sang such sweet songs of hope and encouragement that Bounty thought the chase not so very desperate a matter—and none the more desperate because challenged. So he, too, went at it with his little wallet of salt—bay salt,

Attic salt, the poet's salt—and he hit their tails with such good aim that he caught them both—I am bound to add not greatly struggling in their captivity. When he had them they were worth the holding; for they were love and fame; two precious nightingales often singing in the bush to less satisfying results than those which came to Bounty when he set out upon the chase!

So it is difficult, is it not, to know which path to choose and by what star to steer? When the sun shines on those hedges round about us, it makes them look all of emeralds and flowers, and the birds within them seem so near and their capture so certain, it would be rank cowardice not to dash out and try. Such a rich prize for such a small endeavour!—the next thing to lying open-mouthed on one's back and letting ripe cherries fall in of themselves. That blinding sunlight of Hope! how often it fades and fails when the dark shadow of Ithuriel's spear is thrown across its brightness! Sometimes, indeed, it glows all the mightier for the touch of that magic spear, but in most cases it pales away to nothing, like a glow-worm in the morning, or a watch-fire at noonday—a light never to be rekindled either in this world or the next.

In political life, the hand and the bush get but cross-readings for the bush at times. Like a man playing for high stakes, who refuses to net his winnings on a low number, how often does a politician set aside the lower class honours within his grasp, while aiming at the higher dignities which have the strongest arms in Europe after them. And truly to one to whom the Premiership is the two gold and silver pheasants in the bush, the place of Governor of Victoria, or of Inspector-General of Prisons, is the wren not to be retained at any price. When one has made oneself up for the Under-Secretaryship, the office of Gentleman-at-Arms is not such a very enticing lure; though to many it would of course be the very acme of success. That is as it should be. If it were not for the steps, the whole theory of social life would be at an end, and the counter would stand as high as the woolsack and the clerk's desk would be on a level with the throne. And if it were not for the unsatisfied desires of those who try for ortolans in foreign hedges, the world would go on eating squab-pie made of rooks shot on the premises, and be universally Chinese, and stagnant. If we were all content with our possessions, we might proclaim a general strike of progress; so, though the Two in the Bush are often mocking sinners luring men into ditches and bogs and great desolate plains, still they have their uses, and the sons of men would be so much the poorer by their absence. "Nothing venture, nothing win;" that is the converse of the hand and the bush. For as there is an intaglio to every relieve, so is there a counter-weight and check-string to every proverb; human circumstance being too complex to admit of single lines, and simplicity being known to Dresden shepherdesses only. And then but a bad copy.

But to go back to politics.

Not only individual statesmen playing at loto for portfolios and rooms in Downing-street, but the people too, the mass of the populace, the nation collectively, often loses its bird in the hand by flinging up its cap at the two in the bush. The small bit-by-bit reform that might be had for the asking, and that would solder up broken places, and make rotten corners sound, and sweep out dusty rubbish bins, and do a deal of useful mending and darning—bits of amelioration ready to fall, like ripe pears, if only a child or a summer zephyr shake the boughs—are often postponed for the great radical changes, the creations of new conditions, which are the two divine possibilities in the bush. The abolition of monarchy and the crown of state melted down into porridge-pots; the House of Lords made into a co-operative store, and the peer's ermine exchanged for catskin; neither army nor navy alive and astir, but only standing factories and floating cotton-mills taking the sea-breezes; this is what the madder kind of people want; and any such pigmy steps as improvements in schools, juster marriage laws, a better manner of conveyance, well-arranged friendly societies, and the recognition that a man's soul is his own, and that he can carry it into what temple seems to him most suitable for his needs; all these, and thousands more like to them, your so-called logical radical reformer scouts as utterly unworthy his acceptance. As wisely so a hungry man to whom you offered beef and bacon, might shake his head, and say No, Madras curry and Nesselrode pudding; nothing less and nothing meaner!

Many other examples of the one in the hand and the two in the bush, there are. The wisdom or folly of making for the bush is according generally to the amount of skill in our own right arms, to the straightness of our eyes, the strength of our biceps, and the accuracy with which we can throw a stone or a casting net. Unless we have all these qualifications, we had best be content with what we have and make the most of it, than lose our all in a madcap chase after the unattainable and the impossible!

THE SPIRIT OF NELSON.

A LETTER has fallen in our way, in which a very young officer in the Royal Navy, writing from Malta, describes to his father the circumstances of a recent melancholy accident which cost the country the lives of twelve brave officers and seamen belonging to H.M.S. Orlando. The circumstances strike us as so very interesting, simply related, and we have been so moved by the heroic spirit of one "little midshipman"—whose name we preserve, in the hope that this record may one day be perused with pride by relatives of the gallant boy—that we publish the account.

I have heard the particulars of that most deplorable accident, and as I dare say you would like to hear them too, I will tell you all that are

known. In the first place, I should tell you that the Bay of Tunis is an awful place for squalls.

The party started one morning (it was the 3rd of November), at about eight o'clock, for a shooting and pleasure excursion about twenty miles down the coast. Lieut. S. was the senior officer there, and he to a certain extent took charge of, or was responsible for, the boat in which they went. It was remarked that they were very gloomy on leaving the ship, and also that when they left, the band was playing some selection which was a little sad; upon which Lieut. S. remarked, "I wish they wouldn't play a Dead March for us!" And again, going ashore, one of the men sang "The Sailor's Grave," and other songs of that kind.

They got ashore all right, had lunch ashore, and started for the ship at about half-past three o'clock. When they had made about eight hundred or one thousand yards (according to the coxswain of the boat, who was saved), a violent squall struck her, and capsized her. They all managed to cling to the boat, except the captain of marines, who couldn't swim. He was seen some way off, when a little midshipman—the youngest in the ship, and who could swim very well indeed—struck out and brought him to the boat. It is worthy of mention that the only members of the party who could swim were, the coxswain, an old quartermaster, KEMBLE the little midshipman I have mentioned, and a master's assistant. The coxswain, seeing that the boat was drifting out to sea, said they had better do something, and suggested several things, but they would not adopt any of them, except endeavour to right the boat. This they could not do. He then proposed lashing the oars together, and those who could swim towing those who could not. This being also rejected, he then made up his mind to swim ashore, and started in his clothes. Lieut. S. called him back; upon which he came back, and received orders to stick to the boat. He then said, "Well, sir, it's no use my stopping here. I am very sorry to have to disobey your orders, and I trust I shall be forgiven." He then turned round to the little midshipman, and said, "Mr. Kemble, will you come with me? I will assist you if you find you can't manage it." Kemble said (though as I have told you, he could swim splendidly), "I have orders to remain here, and it is my duty to set an example," and he repeated the orders. The coxswain then asked all those who could swim, if they would come, and they all answered the same way. Was not that a gallant thing, to stay behind when they were otherwise sure of saving their own lives, and all for the sake of being true to the others and to the orders they had received? Particularly, remembering that the example was set by the smallest midshipman in the ship?

The coxswain then wished them good-by and succeeded in getting ashore, but of course he must have had a frightful night, as it came on to blow very hard, and he had not a single thing on; in fact, when he was picked up next morning he was in a sort of delirious state. He said

afterwards that he heard them, or fancied he heard them,* all night, shouting for help; but he could not assist them, as the place he landed at was uninhabited. A long search was made for the bodies, without effect; but a steamer coming in afterwards, without having heard of the accident, reported having seen a body floating, at a distance of, I should imagine, about forty miles from where the accident took place.

The funeral service was read on the quarter-deck of their ship, and the usual volleys were fired for those who were so dearly loved by their shipmates. I feel more for poor little Kemble than for any other of the party, as he had so many sisters, and seemed so loved and so much adored by all his friends. It will be a terrible blow for them, but I hope the noble way in which he behaved will help to console them.

EARTH.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

THE word "Earth" has two significations; one general, the other restricted. It is both the whole, and a portion of the whole. It is either the globe on which we dwell, or it is the solid part of it raised above the seas which is the resting-place of man and terrestrial animals. We may therefore say that The Earth's surface is permanently covered, partly with ice and snow, partly with water, and partly with Earth; which latter, in general terms, is called land, in contradistinction to the other two. We have therefore in our vocabulary both The Earth, Terra, Cybele, our planet; and also Earth, one of the ancient elements, which Aristotle characterised as dry and cold.

Although Lactantius held that the Earth was flat like a pancake, and Augustin that antipodes were an impossibility, the Earth is one of a series of globes, infinite in number but similar in shape. The largest and the smallest bodies with which we are acquainted, are globular; the sun, the planets, their satellites, and microscopic plants and animals, such as volvoxes and monads which may be only infusorial swarms. Small portions of liquid, unattached or slightly so, assume of themselves a globular form, as we see in rain and dewdrops and in globules of mercury and melted lead. Advantage is taken of this principle in the manufacture of shot.

The largest known globular bodies are stars or suns, which make up, altogether, what is called The Universe. The visible universe is so immense as to overwhelm the imagination. Great distances in space are measured by the speed, not of a cannon-ball (which is far too slow), but by that of light. Some have thought that light from different sources might not travel with the same rapidity; Arago, however, has demonstrated that the light of a glow-worm is just as swift as that of the sun. Now, light—which would go more than seven times round

* Fancied, no doubt. The delusion is commonly experienced under like circumstances.

the world in a second of our clock-time, which takes eight minutes and seventeen seconds to reach us from the sun, which is travelling two-and-twenty long years before it arrives here from the dog-star—is estimated to require not less than a million of years to traverse the enormous space which lies between us and the furthest stars of the furthest perceptible nebulae.

The physical difference between stars and planets is not so great as it appears, being probably a question of time merely, of cooling down. Unless geologists are greatly mistaken, Descartes' description of the Earth as "a sun covered with a crust," is correct. The Earth is a spherical egg-shell filled with fiery contents. The sun himself may possibly be one day covered with a crust. If we could peel the Earth as we peel an apple, with about the same proportional thickness of paring, the Earth would become a little sun. Bottom-heat, so beloved of modern gardeners, was not wanting to the primitive vegetation which comes down to us in the shape of coal. Our actual continents repose and float upon the internal nucleus of the Earth, which is still in a state of fusion, or even of fluid elasticity. Whithersoever we direct our steps, we walk upon very tender ground. Earthquakes, upraisings and depressions of the soil, are only slight and gentle approaches to an ulterior equilibrium between the thin outside crust and the bulky mass of fluid within, which is compressed with a force equal to the weight of fourteen hundred atmospheres. Round and above the elastic fluid mass, lies, we are told, a stratum of lava, which in turn is covered by a solid crust of earth not more than forty miles in thickness. Some authorities reduce that depth by one-half. In consequence of greater cooling, the Earth's crust is thicker at the poles than at the equator; which does not prevent Hecla and Geysers from making their pyrotechnic and hydraulic displays. It will be evident that earthquakes are the natural result of a pliable flooring resting on a liquid mass; exactly as the ice-fields of the polar seas are rent by the heaving of the waters beneath them. In this world there is no absolutely stable foundation. The Edinburgh Observatory has verified the permanent oscillation of the ground—a fact which has likewise been manifested in other observatories, to the great annoyance of astronomers, who are thus placed, to a certain degree, in the uncomfortable position of observers on ship-board.

When the terrestrial crust cracks, in consequence of any change of form, the lava is forced through the fissure and there makes its escape. Sometimes even the internal gas boils up and pierces through the lava, projecting, to an altitude of thirty thousand feet, and more, a substance analogous to glass which has not only been melted but reduced to the state of vapour. These vapours fall in the shape of ashes, or rather of volcanic sand, whose nature is so clear and decided, that, amongst other volcanic products, natural glass has been found capable of

being made into bottles, razors, and other utensils.

In general, the cracks in the Earth's crust run on and are continued in the same direction. In France, the whole line of the Rhine presents an almost uninterrupted succession of cracks and inactive volcanoes. In Auvergne, similar quiescent volcanoes lie all in a complete and perfect row. In America, the whole mountain chain which skirts the Pacific betrays the existence of numerous clefts and fissures. But the internal convulsions of the globe do not always break out at the surface. In 1760, subterranean noises, like the rolling of thunder, were heard at Honfleur, in Normandy, without producing any further disturbance.

Hot springs are a natural result of the Earth's internal heat. Every spring which drains into a cavity of considerable depth, will find its walls of rock hot enough to make it boil, and will issue in the state of thermal water. If it be also charged with foreign matters, it becomes not only a thermal but a mineral spring. From a depth of more than seventeen hundred feet, the artesian well of Grenelle has supplied water at eighty-two degrees of Fahrenheit.

At a sufficient depth the temperature would be so high as to prevent water from penetrating deeper. It would be instantly converted into steam, and so sent back to the upper strata. This is probably one of the causes which hinder the infiltration and disappearance of the mass of waters which cover the globe. The ocean is water which cannot strain through a cullender, by reason of the fierceness of the fire beneath it. A red-hot sponge would not soak up water, neither can red-hot caverns absorb the seas.

The long continuance of volcanoes and thermal springs is a further proof of their deep-seated origin. Mountains which, like *Ætna* and *Vesuvius*, have been burning more or less throughout the whole historic period; springs which were known to be hot, and were visited for their healing virtues, thousands of years ago; cannot have a shallow source of heat. Happily, Earth, Water, and Air, are all three bad conductors of heat. Our central calorific or warming-pan, which it might be death to us to lose, has its heat retained by the triple non-conducting wrapper formed by the terrestrial crust, the ocean, and the cloudy sky.

The central fire does more than warm us. Heat, electricity, magnetism, are only correlative forces. Lightning has been known to flash out of the craters of burning mountains. The Earth, say German dreamers, is a big animal, with a loadstone inside it instead of a heart; and it carries on its surface an ambiguous creature, the Sea, electrical and phosphorescent, more sensitive than itself, and infinitely more fecund. But the Sea is no parasite of the great animal. It has no distinct or hostile individuality. On the contrary, it vivifies and fecundates the Earth with its life-giving vapours. All which is merely a figurative way of stating that all things harmonise.

The Earth's place in the solar system is a

happy mean between two extremes. It is neither too near to, nor too far from, our great source of light and heat. The planet nearest to the sun—if the reader will excuse this refreshing of his astronomy—is Mercury; then Venus; and then ourselves. Beyond us is Mars; then comes a group of sixty or seventy little planets, supposed by Lagrange to be the fragments of a large one exploded. That this is not the case, is proved by the particular movements of each one of these small planets. Then follows Jupiter; then Saturn; and finally Neptune, the last being thirty times as far from the sun as we are, and whose inhabitants, if any, must be warmed by an extremely feeble ray. Mars seems to resemble us most in physical geography. Like us, it has its change of seasons, and its polar snows. If Jupiter's belts be clouds or girdling vapours, the Jovine landscapes may not be utterly unlike our own. A visit to Mars and Jupiter would be highly interesting, although attended with inconveniences which we know, not to mention those we know not of. On Mars, we should be ridiculously light and strong; able to skip over houses and tree-tops. On Jupiter, we should be inconveniently heavy and weak, and perhaps unable to stand against its hurricanes. It is not unlikely that the air of neither planet might agree with us. The red tint of Mars is attributed by some to a vegetation coloured like red cabbages and the *Coleus Verschaffeltii*, which is now so fashionable in our gardens.

Our Earth, taken as a whole, is five and a half times denser than water. Although most highly favoured by many beneficial and providential arrangements, Terra, in respect to size, does not claim high rank in the Universe. It is only the three-hundredth part of Jupiter; which itself is not the thousandth part of the sun; whose bulk is only a fraction of Sirius's. It is believed that Sirius has a planet, or "black star," revolving round it which is at least as large as our sun, and may have thousands of smaller ones.

Γη, Ge, is Greek for Earth. Geometry, therefore, teaches us to measure the Earth; Geography, to describe it; Geology, to investigate its history; Geomancy, to tell fortunes by it; Geodesy, to divide and distribute it—land-surveying, in short. Virgil's *Georgics* are poems relating to agricultural matters, to events connected with the culture of the Earth—which brings us to Earth, the element of old chemists, who called the earthy residue of their calcinations and distillations, *caput mortuum*, the sum of dead things.

Earth is not a simple or homogeneous substance, but has been gradually formed by the decomposition of rock and other minerals by natural agencies. The metals even help to form earth. The red colour of many earths is owing to oxide of iron. Both clay and chalk, those wide-spread earths, are now known to have a metallic base. The quality of earths much depends on the nature of the subsoil on which they lie, and out of which they have been

formed. On a chalky subsoil, earth is whitish; on the red sandstone, reddish; on ochre and gravel, yellow or buff; on blue clay, greyish.

Earth, Sea, and Air, are the three grand illustrations of the three forms of matter known to us; earth of the solid, sea of the liquid, and air of the gaseous state. Fire, or heat, is the pervading force which runs through them all, more or less, and keeps them in incessant motion or change. For the law of constant change, dissolution, and renovation, is submitted to by earth as well as by ourselves. "Of absolute rest," says Grove, "Nature gives us no evidence. All matter, as far as we can ascertain, is ever in movement, not merely in masses, as with the planetary spheres, but also molecularly, or throughout its most intimate structure. Every alteration of temperature produces a molecular change throughout the whole substance heated or cooled; so that, as a fact, we cannot predicate of any portion of matter that it is absolutely at rest." Earth, therefore, is not at rest, but is working, fermenting, and changing, for our good. "There is force," says Carlyle, "in every leaf that rots; else, why should it rot?" Whatever rots, returns to earth; earth is thereby refreshed, renewed, and even augmented.

"Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," the impressive formula of our Burial Service, is a succinct account both of what we are, and of what earth is; the immaterial principle joined to the one, and the ever-working forces inherent in the other, being implied although not expressed. Dust we are, and unto dust shall we return. Our bodies are of the earth, earthy. Our blood contains iron. Our corporeal structure is built up on a foundation of bones, whose base is as mineral as a marble column, namely, lime. Without the lime in us, we could not stand erect. Imperious Caesar, dead and turned to clay, might stop a hole to keep the wind away.

Earth is ashes, if ashes be the residue of combustion. Every handful of earth on Earth, has been burnt. Besides passing through the great primeval fire, some of it has been burnt over and over again—in the natural fires existing in warm-blooded animals; in the artificial fires kindled for their various uses by the human race; in the slow spontaneous combustion produced by the oxygen in the air.

Earth is dust. It is partly composed of minute portions severed from the hardest substances by the wedges of frost and the ever-repeated grinding of wind and rain. The friction of currents, the pounding of waves, the crumbling by chemical agencies, have combined to form the heterogeneous compounds which we call earth. Whether in the shape of impalpable clays and marls, or made up of sand, coarse gravel, and shingle; whether as leaf-mould, mud, or animal remains, we may fairly say that earth is dust. It is a complex mixture of pulverised materials, an artistic sort of mince-meat, elaborately and benevolently combined for the support and sustenance of plants, and

through them of animals. Of all the ancient four, therefore, Earth has least right to its title of Element. It is also the most recent, the latest formed; for it had to be prepared and manufactured by the combined action of the other three. Moreover, from the continuance of the same causes, the quantity of earth in the world must be steadily increasing every day.

Soils are earth considered in respect to its suitability for the growth of vegetables, or the habitation of men. They are formed by the combination of two or more of the primitive earths, united with organic matter in a state of decay. The three principal primitive earths are flint or silex, clay, and lime, which occur in a state of minute division, forming unctuous impalpable matter, as well as in the shape of sand, gravel, or shingle. Soils are often described in figurative terms. Rich and poor soils, heavy and light soils, speak for themselves. Hungry soils are such as are greedy of manure, absorbing large quantities, and still demanding more. Happily, they are not insatiable. Mr. Coke of Holkham, and others, have shown that, by judicious treatment, hungry soils may be made to give grateful returns for the good things bestowed upon them. Sour soils are mostly clays impenetrable to water. These, whether wet or dry, are equally impracticable for the farmer. Drought makes them as hard as rock, while the first shower softens them into sloughs of despond. But all water-logged soils are sour, especially such as repose on a clayey subsoil. Draining is, therefore, the best general remedy for sourness.

There are rocky, sandy, clayey, gravelly, chalky, swampy, alluvial, and other soils. On rocky soils and the slopes of hills, the vine produces its very best. Wheat and beans thrive on soils inclined to be clayey; turnips and barley on those tending to be sandy. Oats and hemp have no objection to well-drained and reclaimed bog and swamp. Flax and tobacco must have rich soils; rye and buckwheat will do something in poor ones. Calcareous soils are good for stone-fruit, witness the cherries of Kent and the peaches of Montreuil; while rhododendrons and other heath-mould plants are killed by a small admixture of lime in the soil. Magnesian soil has a bad reputation, which is not always borne out by practical experience; but magnesia is scarcer than the other earths, and is found in smaller quantities. Gypsum in the soil is good for clover, peas, lucerne, and leguminous plants in general. Deep alluvial soils are favourable to hops, and almost every other plant you can name. For ourselves, that is for the location of men, swampy and clayey soils are the least salubrious, gravelly and chalky the healthiest. The relative healthiness of rocky sites often depends on circumstances extraneous to the soil itself.

When silex is the principal ingredient of a soil, it is in the shape of sand or gravel. The friable nature of sandy soils makes them easily cultivated. An excess of sand in any soil is much less injurious than an excess of clay. Clay

is a compact adhesive substance, whose particles are in minute division. It retains moisture with great obstinacy, and retards decomposition in vegetable and animal matter, probably by excluding air. Unmixed clay is both difficult to cultivate, and unproductive when cultivated. Calcareous matter mostly enters a soil in the shape of carbonate of lime, or chalk. Like pure clay and pure silex, pure chalk is a barren soil. Mixed, however, with sand and clay, it forms a fruitful calcareous loam. Loam is a mixture of clay and sand, and sometimes lime, combined with animal and vegetable remains in various proportions. It is the texture of loams, as well as their elements, which render them so valuable for agricultural purposes. Mould is soil which consists principally of decayed vegetables reduced to a light black powder, such as we see in heaps of thoroughly rotten leaves and very old hotbeds of stable manure: From it, the soil of old gardens, bogs, and ancient forests derives its blackness as well as its softness and friability. French gardeners scrupulously economise, under the name of "terreau," all the vegetable mould they can find or fabricate, holding it to be the best of manures, and almost the only one which does not injure the quality of wine made from grapes grown with its assistance.

If air drinks water, and water imbibes air, earth greedily absorbs them both, and so becomes a habitable home for the mole, the worm, the larva, and the perfect insect. So beautifully has the organisation of those creatures been adapted to their "element," that earth is as much the medium for the mole and for sundry grubs and insects to live in, as water is for the fish. What a helpless creature an earthworm is, either free on the surface or fallen into a pool! In the ground it is active, at home, and no doubt happy. A mole out of earth is in scarcely less pitiable plight than a fish out of water—more so, certainly, than the eel or the flying-fish, without reckoning the fishes which climb up trees. The limbs of moles are so fitted for swimming *in* earth, that *on* earth they can hardly be said to walk. They paddle along and push themselves on, somehow. If they roll over, woe betide them! I have found moles that had ventured into upper air, lying flat on their backs unable to stir, and waiting for some bird or beast of prey, or simply for hunger (of which they are very impatient), to put an end to their distress. If a friendly push with a stick or a foot set them on their legs again, they disappear underground with wonderful rapidity, firmly resolving, doubtless, never again to fall into a like predicament. Their out-turned palms, their velvet coats, their shovel like paws, their defective eyes, their quick ears, their fine scent, their hog-like snouts, their muscular power, all combine to fit them for life in earth.

So great is the harmony of terrestrial arrangements, that earth cures the maladies brought on by ocean; while ocean cures those incidental to earth. Feeble constitutions afflicted with

scrofula, panting lungs in populous cities pent, weary brains sinking under the struggle for life, are sent to the sea, to bathe, breathe, and take their rest. Similarly, not sea-sickness only, but sea-scurvy too, are often to be got rid of by a return to land. Does the reader require to be reminded of the happy moment (if he has ever known it) when he stepped from off a rolling and pitching, on to a still and steady, floor? The pavement of the humblest alley, the ruts of the worst kept road, are to many preferable to the deck of the finest ship that ever swam. And in cases of scurvy, earth, earthy produce—fresh roots, vegetables, and fruits—even earth baths, are panaceas. Like Antæus, son of Neptune and Terra, the ailing sailor gains fresh strength every time he sets foot on earth. For other complaints, mud baths are in high esteem in sundry localities; as at St. Amand in the north, and at Dax in the south, of France, where (especially at the former place) people play at being toads and frogs for the cure of gout and rheumatism.

Many earthy matters have great affinity and attraction for many gases. Mr. Smee discovered that coke or charcoal might have so much hydrogen firmly attracted to it that, when plunged into solutions of gold, silver, or copper, an extensive deposition of metal took place; moreover, the charcoal was able to retain the gas for many days. Earths, by naturally exercising the same principle on an extensive scale, tend greatly to purify the atmosphere. Lime is eminently useful as a purifier. A simple and easy mode of quickly purifying the air of a small apartment in which people are crowded, is to mix a bucket of quick lime and water to a creamy or custardy consistence; and then to take a common bellows, thrust its nozzle into the mixture, and blow away. The vitiated air of the room, entering by the valve of the bellows, will be forced through the lime and water, and will leave in it the carbonic acid, and perhaps other noxious elements which it contains. This process, however, supplies no oxygen, which must be obtained by the free admission of air; but it gets rid of impurities which might cause deleterious effects.

We cannot but regard it as a providential arrangement that all earths should have an affinity for, or the power of retaining, the gases or effluvia which arise from the putrefactive fermentation of animal and vegetable matter which takes place on or near the surface. It thus becomes *our interest* to use as manure, to put out of the way for our own benefit, the substances which would prove most noxious to our health if left exposed. Many animals even act instinctively as scavengers, and place noisome rejectamenta underground. A poison thus becomes a producer of food. The animal world breathes freely; the vegetable world is nourished. Herbivorous creatures grow and thrive; carnivorous creatures both eat them and make use of their produce, their fur and wool. For the same reason, economical farmers employ much earth in making their manure-heaps. So power-

ful a disinfectant is earth, that the mould, thus impregnated, is nearly as valuable as the dung itself in enriching and improving the soil to which it is applied.

Earth has been called our last home, our final resting-place. On the very account just stated, it should be so. The various nations of the world have had, and still have, various ways of disposing of their dead. European society takes it for granted, whether in mournful or in merry mood, that we should be deposited for our final sleep in the lap of our common mother.

Earth shall cover her,
We'll dance over her

When my wife is underground.

Lie heavy on him, earth; for he (an architect)
Laid many a heavy load on thee.

Perhaps the most horrible practice of all is the Indian fashion of tossing corpses into tidal rivers, where they shock the sight and pollute the air for days together. The barbarous custom of suspending departed relations in the air, on poles or scaffolds, cannot be salubrious, and must be unsavoury. Embalming is more trouble than our remains are worth, especially as it is merely a temporary preservation; for, as we have already seen, there is nothing on earth which does not change, slowly or quickly, as the case may be.

Burning, and the subsequent Urn Burial, are rapid, effectual, and striking processes, which have provoked some of Browne's best eloquence. "That great antiquity, America, lay buried for thousands of years, and a large part of the earth is still in the urn unto us.

"Christians dispute how their bodies should lie in the grave. In urnal interment, they clearly escaped this controversy. To be gnawed out of our graves, to have our skulls made drinking-bowls, and our bones turned into pipes, to delight and sport our enemies, are tragical abominations escaped in burning burials. Urnal interments and burnt relics lie not in fear of worms, or to be an heritage for serpents."

On the other hand, "He that lay in a golden urn, eminently above the earth, was not like to find the quiet of his bones. Many of those urns were broke by a vulgar discoverer, in hope of inclosed treasure. The ashes of Marcellus were lost above-ground, upon the like account. When Alexander opened the tomb of Cyrus, the remaining bones discovered his proportion, whereof urnal fragments afford but a bad conjecture, and have this disadvantage of grave interments, that they leave us in ignorance of most personal discoveries." And they do not always save the corpse from insult. It was "an affront upon Tiberius; while they but half burnt his body, and in the amphitheatre, according to the custom in notable malefactors; whereas Nero seemed not so much to fear his death, as that his head should be cut off, and his body not burnt entire.

"That carnal interment or burying was of the elder date, the old examples of Abraham and

the patriarchs are sufficient to illustrate; and were without competition, if it could be made out that Adam was buried near Damascus, according to some tradition. But though earth hath engrossed the name, yet water hath proved the smartest grave; which in forty days swallowed almost mankind, and the living creation; fishes not wholly escaping, except the salt-ocean were handsomely contempered by a mixture of the fresh element."

The list of earth's usefulness is not easily exhausted. Earth supplies colours for painting, as ochre, umber, and ultramarine, besides numerous brilliant metallic compounds; materials for pipes, bricks, pottery, tiling, pavements, statuettes, crockery, and artificial gems; the means of cleaning and polishing, as "French chalk," Bath-brick, tripoli, fullers'-earth; aids to both defensive and offensive military operations, from Uncle Toby's fortifications to General Todleben's earthworks; a simple cement, for grafting, to wit, and for stopping beer-barrels; as medicine, like magnesia, chalk, collyrium, and Armenian bole; for thrashing-floors, garden-walks, ant-hills, and savages' huts. There is even eatable earth which, taken into the stomach, lulls, if it do not satisfy, the cravings of hunger.

Before altogether quitting the Earth, we will, in the second chapter, go a little deeper into it, following the itinerary of three recent travellers.

STADDON FARM.

Houses, especially country houses, have for me a peculiar attraction, inasmuch as I often fancy that I find in them, as one does in human faces, a character and expression all their own, and quite apart from their beauty or ugliness, or the degree of liking I may have for those that live in them.

It is this character, fanciful or not, which makes the image of many a house which was familiar to me in my old South Cove life, cling so pertinaciously to my remembrance, that often with very little encouragement, or no encouragement, its likeness starts out of the mist of the past and claims recognition, although no pains nor pleasures of my own, or of those I loved, are graven on its face.

Such a house was Staddon Farm; a prim little grey homestead, now existent only in the remembrance of a few old prosers like myself, but which, in the days of my youth, was nested high among the tufted hills that overlooked the sea some half-mile from my home.

Staddon had no architectural beauty to boast of, though its antiquity was not of mushroom date, for it had been in the old time an outlying farm, on the skirts of the fair demesne belonging to a great monastery miles inland. The narrow maze of winding lanes, full of violets and briar-roses in spring, and, it must be owned, dripping deep with mud all the winter long, which we called Staddon lanes, ran twisting and twining through a deep ferny rocky dell,

overhung with aged ashes and elms, the special haunt of innumerable blackbirds, whose sweet broken questions and answers, now coaxing, now mocking, now exulting, might be heard there all the day long, and pretty nearly all the year through. Then, the path crossed a tiny tinkling brook, which a few steps higher up made a portentous amount of bustle and scurry round a corner formed by a mossy lump of grey rock, and gave itself vastly conquering airs among the stepping-stones, especially after a hard shower of rain. Up the hill-side, among a cluster of other hills soft and bossy with golden furze, went Staddon-lane, and ended at the farm-yard wall and the narrow ivied door with the treacherous high stone threshold.

The farm-yard went shelving down-hill to the dwelling-house, which stood in a dip on the further side, and a very noisy untidy old-world sort of farm-yard, I must needs own, it was; rudely and only half paved; sloppy, and strewn with litter; and above all, rendered terrible to me in the remotest days of my acquaintance with it, by threatening visions of a truculent mother-sow, whose family broils seemed never off her mind, and by the apparition of a luscious white calf with one black eye, which persisted in charging at me with tail erect from the open cow-house door. There was a slender grey tower—thrashing-floor below, pigeon-house above—which stood in one corner of the farm-yard; a bell had probably once hung in its upper story, and, though it showed no other sign of having served for religious purposes, it was invariably called "the chapel." The answer often given by a farm-servant to inquiries after the master of the house, to the effect that "Maister be gwayn to chapel," only signified that the master of Staddon, Mr. Isaac Hart, must be looked for within the low-arched doorway of the little tower, ever resonant with the cooing and whirring of pigeons, and the dull heavy rhythm of flails.

The way from the farm-yard to the front entrance lay between hen-houses and pigsties, and the outhouse where old Croppy the donkey abode, and skirted the kitchen-door, beside which an immense blush-rose-bush overspread the wall and touched the low eaves of the roof. Then, turning a sharp corner, one stood on the narrow paved path which ran along the front of the house, where the low windows of the best rooms looked across a straight stripe of border, filled always (as it seemed to me) with the gayest and most glowing flowers, and a decrepit dwarf wall that bounded it, to the soft wavy perspective formed by the turfy dip between the hills, in the middle distance of which grew a weird old ash-tree, all knotted and gnarled, as if its woody joints were deformed by cramps and rheumatisms. And away beyond, and far below, the pale turquoise blue of the sea shimmered as with diamond-dust till it met the pearly sky horizon.

Staddon used to be the goal of many of our walks, when, under the convoy of kind sandy-haired long-suffering Miss Chamberlayne, our

deaf governess, my sisters and I went roaming about the beautiful hills in all weathers. It goes to my heart now to think how, as often as our unruly tribe made a descent upon the quaint dominions of Miss Arabella Dart, the bachelor farmer's maiden sister, that poor dunny dozy creature, Croppy, used to be led out on the turf from his warm stall, caparisoned with a wonderfully patched and incommodious side-saddle, and given up to the exacting caprices of a trio of mischievous imps, who enjoyed nothing better than teasing and persecuting him, like a bevy of importunate summer flies, into the extreme measure of a brief and superannuated gallop.

But all this time I have not said what was the peculiar character and stamp of expression which fixed the likeness of Staddon in my memory after the indelible fashion which, as I have mentioned, it is the property of some houses to possess. It was the marvellous resemblance between the house and its master; a resemblance, as it seemed to me, not merely fanciful, or based on generalities, but tangible, and, so to speak, physical; a likeness of lines and colours, which I felt all the more because I knew I could not make it felt by others. As often as I saw his weather-dried little visage, his sharp nose, square chin, and high-pitched forehead running up into a yellow-grey stubble of short-cropped hair, there stood before me the queer time-stained little old house, its low gable crowned with some fluttering sprays of wall-flower rooted among the stones. The pinched and unpleased hat he always wore perched high on his head, did duty for the dilapidated little tower where the dovecoat was; and the jutting angles and ragged roofs of the incongruous farm-buildings were aptly mimicked by his sharp elbows, and the meagre fluttering skirts of his high-shouldered swallow-tailed coat. I never saw the brick and mortar *double* so strangely like its fleshy brother, as one day in the late autumn, when one of our grand wild winds was abroad, and the sky was full of piles of hurrying lurid cloud, fitful scuds of rain, and weak gleams of sunshine. As I came panting before the wind along the dip between the hills, one of those gleams was just flushing the face of the old house dashed with rain and spray, and touching the sharp once-gilded gnomon of the sun-dial over the door, while the rows of great scarlet and crimson and yellow dahlias were tossing their burning faces, and swaying like tortured things at every blast. Staddon was that day looking its best, and as I was more than twelve years old then—for Croppy, poor soul, I know had gained his well-earned rest many a winter before—I was quite capable of feeling, and *did* feel, the picturesque charm of the place. Yet, for all that, nothing could prevent my recurring to the grotesque likeness between master and house, as soon as I entered the low wainscoted kitchen on the left of the entrance door. For there sat Farmer Dart, flushed and peevish with the unlooked-for, and certainly undeserved, visitation of a twinge

of gout in his knee, the firelight glittering on his sharp red nose and flaring over his wrinkled russet skin, with the pale pinched grey hat planted grimly above, and, to complete the picture, a grand flowered chintz dressing-gown, crimson and yellow and green, which Miss Arabella had carefully folded about his waist and lower limbs, but which waved its parti-coloured skirts, like the flowers outside, in the draught of the opening door.

When first I knew Staddon, Farmer Dart and his sister, with their men-servants and maid-servants, were its only denizens. In later years, our worthy little French master, Monsieur Huillier, and his mother, became lodgers there for a considerable period. How so strange a thing should have come to pass as that the master of Staddon should have admitted a couple of foreigners to a permanent seat at his hearth-side, I am quite unable to guess, but there they were living, and living in excellent good harmony too: partly owing, no doubt, to the unfeigned admiration of the French mother and son for all things English, and partly to the sympathy between Madame Huillier and Miss Arabella in the matter of dried simples and medicinal confections, in the preparation and exhibition of which to suffering mortals earth was a devoted adept, though I more than half suspect that each in her secret heart looked down upon many of the other's nostrums as vain and superstitious. One strong reason that Madame had for considering so out-of-the-way an abode desirable, was her anxiety to remove her son, her dear Victor, whom she cared for and cosseted and guarded against designing womankind with a hen-like fussiness, as though, at near forty, he were still quite incapable of self-defence or management, from contact with certain too potent attractions at South Cove. There was one sea-side house, called "The Rocks," which she especially hated, and the very mention of which would set her grey moustache quivering, and the perky brown bow on her cap nodding with a suppressed wrath, which filled us mischievous young people with delight. "The Rocks" stood at the extreme end of one of the horns of the crescent-shaped quay, and in the broad shadow of Stony Point, where the branches of the garden-bushes were shorn away and bent landwards on the side towards the sea, and the spray dashed over the chimney-pots every time it blew a gale.

I shall have to come back to "The Rocks" in the course of my rambling old stories, and to tell what manner of folks were the Crouch Tolleys, who occupied the house for several years, and were, in truth, as singular a family as any of our South Cove notables, but at present I have only to do with the contraband attraction which set Madame Huillier's bow a-nodding, as I have said, and allured her generally obedient Victor in the direction of Stony Point. This attraction was Miss Davida Tolley, the orphan daughter of the long-deceased younger brother of Mr. Crouch Tolley. Madame Huillier, so kind and considerate in her demure fashion towards all the world besides (except when a

touch of acrid sectarianism curdled up her better nature), had no consideration, no indulgence, for poor Miss Davida and her doings: from her long solitary rides on old Hector, the venerable relic of a hunter who tenanted her uncle's little stable, to the perpetual mixture of faded greens and blues in her somewhat untidy attire, which always gave my vagabond fancy the impression that her gowns and shawls were continually afflicted with a series of severe contusions. Her flute playing too—her only accomplishment, and one strange enough, it must be allowed, in a lady—came under the ban of Madame's most fiery anathemas. It was, in truth, as she well knew, the secret of the offending Victor's first slip into transgression, for Miss Davida had a true musical ear, and skill and feeling enough to reach the hearts of her hearers, especially if by chance the grotesque figure of the player were unseen. And Victor Huillier really prized good music made by others, though his own was angular and colourless enough. And so, of course, the luckless flute-playing of Miss Davida was ranked among the very worst of those transgressions against the duties of right-thinking spinsterhood, by which, as Madame loudly declared, "that old maiden was for ever shocking the conveniences."

Many a time, in our walks, we met Miss Davida trotting along the lanes, her short olive-green habit splashed to the knees, and her pale blue bonnet-strings fluttering behind her, and many a time she made my sisters happy by the gift of heavy bunches of great shiny blackberries which she had twisted off the hedges on her way, with the hooked whip she always carried. I myself was growing a great girl then, and generally lingered a few steps in the rear on such occasions, trying hard to leave the taste for blackberries behind me with other childish propensities, but wanting the courage to look on calmly at the feast.

At Godpapa Vance's, too, I used to see Miss Davida, but rarely, for her restless ways and abrupt jerks of laughter discomposed the old gentleman, and I verily believe made him half afraid of her, so used was he to weigh out his emotions as he did his rhubarb and manna, by the grain. Aunt Bella, dear soul, with her large benevolence and her proneness to give a share of protection to all things persecuted, had a kind word to say of the offending "old maiden," as often as Madame's wrath overflowed in complaints against her; and she would have taken up her defence yet more stoutly, but for the unconscious feeling of liege-vassalage to her "beloved," which constrained her, as far as her sweet nature would permit, to accept godpapa's nervous dislikes, and bow to his washed-out antipathies, and so keep the gilding always bright and burnished on the judgment-scales of her idol, even at the expense of a speck or two on her own.

Once, and once only, our walking party, Miss Chamberlayne at its head, came upon Miss Davida and her worshipper, strolling in Staddon-lane, or rather just turning into the lane

from that pretty miniature glen, where the rivulet made an abrupt turn, as I said before, round a point of grey rock, and the blackbirds were for ever asking pleasant questions of one another, and seemingly getting no answer. I must premise that the rencontre took place before Madame Huillier and her son went up to lodge at Staddon Farm, and was, indeed, indirectly the cause of that event. Miss Davida was, as usual, perched on old Hector, but in an unwonted and meditative attitude, the rein loose in one drooping hand, and the stiff horn-handled whip swaying in the other, while the green gauze veil which should have shaded her features had perversely turned round and meandered down her back. Monsieur Victor seemed to have gained all that she had lost in briskness. His gait was more elastic, and his look far less prim, than usual. We, sharp-eyed little critics, saw at a glance, as they came upon us, that our demure teacher, "Mr. Howly," was looking up earnestly into Miss Davida's face, and that his right hand was helping hers to guide poor Hector's flapping rein, although they, on seeing us, instantly fell into a more common-place position, and our discreet governess, who, though deaf, was by no means blind, after a passing bow of recognition to the pair, turned into the glen they had just left, and so placed her little troop in safety among the harmless primroses and bluebells. But one thing we saw—how could we help seeing it?—in that brief passing glance, which set our hearts fluttering with laughter, and our tongues busily chattering in an under tone for the rest of the walk. It was a straggling garland of ivy and forget-me-nots—those fine large turquoise-blue forget-me-nots we had gathered so often where they sat dipping their feet in the rivulet—wreathed carelessly round Monsieur Huillier's rustic straw hat and ending in a maze of stalks over his left ear, like the head-gear of a certain picture of Vertumnus lightly clothed in a green rag, which used to adorn our Roman Mythology. No doubt Miss Davida's hand had placed the flowers there, and they had both forgotten the fact in the hurry of meeting us, but the ridiculous incongruity of the adornment was of course the only thing that caught our fancy and set us laughing hours afterwards with its comical remembrance.

Ah me! how often in these latter years, when trying to live back for a moment into those phases of feeling with which, in the old days, I and my compeers in age were wont to regard any symptom of great and unusual emotion, any outward sign of mighty heart-quaking on the part of our elders—how often, I say, have I had to confess to myself that, after all, healthy childhood, in its early portion at least simple, trustful, innocent childhood—the poet's ideal of all that is pure and good—is but a soulless beautiful shape, like the fair water-spirit of the German tale. Pleasantly enough it wanders along the singing summer land of its ignorance, where the heavy branches of the awful tree of knowledge cast as yet no shadow on the turf, and the red rose-

leaves are never plucked, and laid up as dry relics of past delight; yet, alas! this sweet and tender creature is, in truth, more dumb, selfish, and merciless, in the presence of any strong, or noble, or passionate emotion, than would be the wayworn man or woman it shall one day become, when the evil world shall have faded its freshness, tangled the golden strands of its simplicity, and set its footsteps to a funeral march, tramping painfully through slough and shade, and never more to lead the wreathed fandangoes long left behind in the bowers of that singing paradise.

Poor, homely Miss Davida, ill provided, and little cared for in her daily life! Poor, hard-worked, prosaic Monsieur Victor! The little overflow of tenderness conveyed in the giving and the wearing of that uncouth garland was very likely the first snatch of melody which had sweetened the ever-jarring monotony of their lives, in spite of all the scrapings of his tenor, and the pensive pipings of her flute. But of course the broad caricature of Monsieur Huillier's bedizened hat and Miss Davida's drooping veil were the only features of the picture which touched my fancy. Would they had not done so. For in the course of that day I was the unlucky and unwitting means of bringing a hail-storm of trouble about the ears of the ill-starred pair, by the vivid remembrance I retained of their strange appearance.

It so happened that I was engaged to dine and spend that lovely May afternoon at Godpapa Vance's in Meadow-row. Aunt Bella was unable, as it chanced, to sit and chat with me that day before dinner in our usual sunny window-seat, for she was closeted with Tackett in the lower chamber, where the mysterious gallipots and pill-boxes were, and where that ghastly picture of the race-horse Childers stood planted on its bony legs above the mantelshelf, taking part in the careful bottling of some delicate elder-flower syrup, that morning concocted by Keziah from the Dowager Mrs. Vance's family receipt-book.

I wandered in and out of the room once or twice with a sniff and a shudder, for the Venetian blinds were down, and the cupboards wide open. I kissed and buzzed about dear Aunt Bella for a while, and pronounced judgment on the merits of her clear amber-coloured syrup, and then I betook me to the drawing-room, where, lighting on a pencil, and extracting a scrap of paper from Aunt Bella's writing-book, now only laid on the table for show, I sat down behind the china bowl of early pinks, intent on executing a sketch of that subject dear to every girl-artist scarce yet in her teens, the "Portrait of a Young Lady in Ball-dress."

But, somehow, the scene of the morning recurred to me as I began, and in a twinkling the curly head and feathers of the "Young Lady" were transmuted into a likeness of poor Miss Davida stooping over Hector's neck, with Monsieur Huillier triumphally wreathed, pacing at her bridle-rein. I had to begin from the lady's poke bonnet, pushed backward and upward, like the keel of a stranded boat, and

showing the thin harsh black hair pulled straight behind her ears, as no one wore it then. Next came the round forehead and large out-looking eyes—Miss Davida's eyes were by no means ugly, but of course that did not enter into my conception of the portrait, so I gave her the eyes of a lobster. I exaggerated, too, the flatness of her nose, and the slight projection of her upper front teeth, and then passed on with masterly strokes to her lank figure, insisting unduly on its real angularity, and especially bringing out the long booted foot projecting below the short habit. So much importance did I give, in fact, to Miss Davida's figure, that poor Hector became a sort of mere after-thought and interloper, and was so curtailed in the matter of legs, owing to the shortness of the paper, that he assumed a painful likeness to a monstrous turnspit-dog, with the head and mane of a sea-serpent. Monsieur Victor, too, I well remember, preceded his lady and her steed, for I was totally unable to make him occupy his proper place in the picture, so he was represented as looking back at her, cocking his Roman nose jauntily in the air, and theatrically extending his hand with all five fingers outstretched as in earnest entreaty, while the garland, on the drawing of which I lavished great care and pains, fluttered a yard from his hat.

When the design appeared to me complete, I put the finishing stroke to it, in order to leave no possibility of mistake as to the subject, by printing the names of Miss Davida Tolley and Monsieur Huillier (mis-spelled, by the way, I remember) over the heads of the lovers; across the blurred pencil-marks which stood for the hedge I scrawled "Staddon-lane;" while from Monsieur Victor's open mouth proceeded the touching exclamation, in round hand, "Oh, you dear!"

I was stopped in a last flourish I was giving to Hector's tail, by the sound of godpapa's lame foot on the stairs, so I pushed paper and pencil into the drawer where Aunt Bella kept her knitting, and, by the time dinner was over, had forgotten all about my drawing, and was standing among the flower-beds of the little garden, profitably engaged in patting the round cheeks of the heavy Gueldres roses, to make the rain-drops left in them by a morning shower fly out in sparks upon my face and dress. Suddenly Tackett threw up the drawing-room window and called me. Wondering at the summons, I turned unwillingly from my Gueldres roses, and went slowly up-stairs, possessed with a misgiving lest godpapa should have lighted upon some terrible new sea-monstrosity in his walks, and should intend to honour me with a first sight of it. But far more appalling than sight of any living creature that creeps or wriggles among rocks, was the presence that awaited me. There, behind Aunt Bella's chair, stood Madame Huillier, one hand behind her back, the other grasping the chair, her face flushed, her head trembling, her black eyebrows twisted into a knot of in-

dignation. The moment I looked at Madame's face, I remembered my delinquency. O, that miserable drawing! O, why had Madame come to pay an afternoon visit, and, above all, why, O why, had she gone to fetch Aunt Bella's knitting out of that guilty drawer, and lighted on my unmistakable performance!

I went silently over to Aunt Bella, and slid my hand into hers for sheer weakness of spirit. I verily believe my touch was a sort of comfort to her at the moment, so confused and troubled was she at having had to bear the first brunt of the storm. She only whispered, "Dear Boonie," to give me courage. Boonie, I have said before, was the pet name she used to give me. Then came Madame's menacing hand slowly from behind her back, and held my luckless caricature on high—I suppose to prevent my snatching at it, and by her frowns, and her cut-and-thrust questions, and O! by the tremendous bobbing of that ominous brown bow on her forehead, she speedily wrenched out of me all my reminiscences of the scene of the morning, and plainly showed by the violence of her wrath, that however hitherto tormented by suspicions of her son's transgression—and why his admiration for Miss Davida should have seemed so grave a sin in the good lady's eyes I cannot to this hour rightly understand—yet the fatal certainty of the facts only reached her through my unfortunate caricature, for which I had to suffer over and above the present terrors of that dreadful examination, such an endless series of French impositions, and such maddening applications of irregular verbs in the future, as utterly sickened me of pictorial attempts for a long time.

But these lighter troubles had hardly faded out, before another event occurred, which impressed me the more, inasmuch as it placed me for the first time face to face with death. When poor Godpapa Vance was so angry with Aunt Bella on the evening of his quartet party, for miscalling his new conchological hobby a "Pholex," he little dreamed how bitterly those ill-omened Pholases would yet be revenged on him for so obstinately poking them out of their peaceful retirement in the limestone rock. Only a few months after that quartet party, he came home one day, hoarse and feverish from a walk, during which he had spent a long hour in lounging and probing their holes with his cane in the teeth of an east wind. The hoarseness became a bad cold, and the bad cold became a fatal sickness: a sort of rapid senile consumption I think the doctors called it.

The real illness seemed to put his visionary maladies to flight. It appeared, if I may say so, to satisfy him as to his claims to be called an invalid, and he grew much less querulous and exacting in the last weeks of his life. After a few days of confinement to his bed, he was allowed to get up again, and even encouraged to potter about the house, and busy himself with his old employments. But I think he never cared now to hunt up his symptoms in "Carver's book," perhaps from an inward consciousness of his condition, though no word of it had fallen

from those about him. Strangely, too, he seemed to try and persuade himself that his sufferings, which, after all, were by no means sharp, were more fanciful than anything else; he, who in former days would sulk for hours if his right to a share of some ghastly malady was disallowed! Nay, in the diary I have spoken of, and which godpapa kept till a week before his death, his only mention of his health during those weeks consisted for the most part of such remarks as, "Not much to complain of, thank God;" "a little shortness of breath, but less cough;" and so forth. Towards the end he was much tormented by restlessness and want of sleep; but even then he was marvellously patient, considering his nervous irritable temper; and, after a bad night, he would even allow one of us young ones to sit down on a stool at his feet and read him into a doze: a condescension which to us at first seemed hardly credible, but which we were glad to remember when he was gone.

And Aunt Bella! Loving, devoted Aunt Bella! What of her, when she saw "her beloved" thus gliding away from her, almost painlessly, but very surely, and with him all the music and sunshine and life of her life?

Nay, she did *not* see it, poor darling; for her blindness had by this time grown so dense that she could distinguish no feature in that beloved face, though she yet saw the outline of any one standing betwixt her and the light. She would still sometimes flutter her small brown fingers—pretty, round, tapering fingers—close before her eyes, to ascertain if she could yet discern their motion, and that little she always saw as long as she lived; but the wasting and waning of her poor old husband, his weary sorrowful look, his shrinking and shrivelling up, until his very head, small as it always had been, seemed half its former size, was mercifully hidden from her. She was always with him now, for she had grown bolder in her care, and he more helpless in his weakness; and I am sure she knew his state by his step, by the tone of his voice, by his very gentleness with her. But I think, with that knowledge, and out of the depth of it, came so strong a conviction of her having but a short time to stay on earth without him, that it enabled her, blind as she was, to be the same ministering angel, even to his last moment of consciousness, as she had been through all their married years.

She had a little patient word often on her lips in that sad time, which sounds very touching to me now in the remembrance. It was, "Ah! that blessed hope!" And I remember the first time I heard her say it—it was but a very few days before his death—she had left him sleeping for a moment, and was standing by my side at the sitting-room window where we had so often watched for his return together. I, longing to comfort her, but not knowing what to say, nor whether I ought to break the silence, had caught up one of her little hands, and was kissing and smoothing it as I often did, when she took her poor dim eyes from those broken

flights of steps on Stony Point where they had unconsciously rested, and smiled down on me and whispered, "Ah, Boonie, dear! that blessed hope!" I almost started, for I fancied she must be deluding herself with a dream of godpapa's recovery, which we all knew at that time was hopeless; but now, I feel that it was the hope of soon following her "beloved" in death that made the poor eyes smile. After godpapa died, I do not think she ever used the words. The hope had almost grown to certainty then.

Godpapa's life went out meekly and patiently enough. He died with his poor lean hand folded in the clasp of his true-hearted tenderly loving wife. There was no "agony," as people call it, in his departing. A little catching of the breath, a little quivering of the limbs, were all he had to endure. During the last hour or two, Aunt Bella, sitting by his pillow fanning away the faintness of death, was more than once bidden to speak to the dying man, to see if he yet recognised her voice. Was it a tearful memory of the days of their old old courtship that made her twice call him by his christian name, "Roger! Roger, dear!" by which, uncoupled with the surname, she had never been used to speak to him, even in my father's remembrance? Did she fancy the name could have for him, amid the shadows of the death-laze, the same talismanic power that it had retained for her? However that might be, poor godpapa *did* hear it, and did know her too, and feebly pressed her hand each time in answer. Alas for the moment of supreme anguish, when that flickering pressure died out, and with it the troubled breathing, and Aunt Bella could lay her head upon the pillow, and let out the hard tearless sobs without thought of disturbing him who had been all her thought. But she indulged in no extravagant violence of grief, and soon let old Madame, who had been a great comfort to her throughout her trial, lead her quietly away.

So Godpapa Vance was laid by a long train of mourners, under the great twin elm-trees, close to the church-path at the Cove. And thereafter Aunt Bella lived alone in Meadow-row: Tackett and Keziah, Bet and Duke the pointer, occupying their wonted places in the household. Small change was there, either inside or outside of the quiet house. All things went on after a little while, as usual. The very study was duly dusted, aired, and kept holy, as of yore, and I am afraid that we children, selfish as we were, were half glad poor godpapa was not there to awe us, till we marked how silent and drooping dear Aunt Bella was; how often the white lambs-wool or the braiding silks lay untouched beside her; and how her chirping little songs had quite died out, though there was no one near her now to take exception at their want of skill.

Still as the months passed on, this first great numbness of the heart wore off, and she would talk again at times, on the old themes too, in the old cheerful voice which called young children and dumb creatures about her, as the sound of the pipe is said to call the merry little

lizards irresistibly to listen. Far from shunning speech of her "beloved," or "that dear angel," as she would call him now at times, she seemed to find the greatest satisfaction in referring to the circumstances which she thought gave him the highest claim on her gratitude and affection, that she might embalm her Saint's memory in a precious casket, and so fall down and worship it! What she loved best to speak of, was her weary work-a-day life before she knew him; his stupendous generosity in choosing her for a wife; and the joy she had felt when first she began to find that her presence in the dull old London house had power to fence him off from many a bitter querulous word and look of his crabbled old mother.

I never loved to sit thus listening to dear Aunt Bella half as well as after godpapa's death; for I was older now, and could estimate her true and tender nature at something like its value. She seemed in my eyes, too, quite handsome:—no, handsome is not the word, quite lovely, though so very unlike any type of loveliness that I had ever seen.

If the truth must be told—a truth which would have stabbed dear Aunt Bella to the heart could she have ever so remotely conceived it—Mrs. Vance, the widow, was far more comely in her simple black dress and prim close cap, from under the border of which a few little iron-grey rings of hair peeped out on her forehead, than ever she had been as a wife. The gaudy flowered chintzes and the gay taffeties were laid aside for ever, and her great green sun and her bright-coloured braiding silks were thenceforward the only patches of colour about her, as she sat day by day in the usual place, but turned a little from the window now: wearing out the hours in patient occupation, and waiting her appointed time.

One day I brought her tidings of a wedding. One of my cousins, a frank blue-eyed sunshiny girl of nineteen, the darling of her home, was going to marry a neighbouring squire's son: a gay generous-tempered fair-faced stripling, who had loved her ever since they were both out of long clothes, and had told her so while they were yet in pinafores. We were all in a pleasant bustle about this marriage, especially I, who was to be exalted to the signal honour of acting as sixth bridesmaid on the occasion. So I emptied all my budget to Aunt Bella, and it was the first time I had seen her smile brightly and kindly with anything like her own cheerful spirit, since the great sorrow fell upon her. She even fell to talking of bridal finery and of the tall fly-cap and rich white lutestring sacque in which she had helped to array some friend of her young days—long, long turned to dust—when she went to the altar with a dashing young soldier, who was killed at the outbreak of the American war.

Aunt Bella even undertook to give me an idea of that bride's dignified head-dress, by the help of a sheet of newspaper and a few pins, and truly if the form of the original edifice at all resembled that of the copy as fastened to the

crown of her own widow's cap, it must have produced a very remarkable effect on those who had the good fortune to behold it.

"Ah, Boonie, dear," said Aunt Bella to me, with a quiet sigh, when the fly-cap was taken off, and she had turned to her netting again; "ah, Boonie, my child! Selfish old soul as I am, talking of that wedding sets me thinking of my own, that was so unlike it. How could it be otherwise, with *me* for the bride? People are fond of preaching, especially to you little ones, about good looks being of small account. I do not believe such a saying was ever heartily uttered by any woman who was without them."

It was a weakness in dear Aunt Bella, this yearning after the unattainable gift of beauty; it was a weakness, I know it was, and I knew it even then, but the symptoms of vain regret which would peep out now and then from a heart so honest and unselfish as hers, only proved how painfully and persistently the fact of her unloveliness must have been ever before her, like a false mirror, to scare her with a distorted exaggeration of her own image. And even from this small feminine weakness her sweet nature conjured out an unmerited offering to her life's idol, for, after sitting awhile silent, she broke out with trembling lips:

"Perhaps, child, it was best so. For if I had been worthier of my beloved's choice, I might have taken it to be my due, and so not have been half thankful enough for it. But to think that that dear angel chose out *me*, with my handsome clever sisters to choose from!" and here the struggling voice fainted off into a sob, and we talked no more about weddings, for that day.

No one said or thought that Aunt Bella died of grief for godpapa's loss, when about twelve months later his grave was opened to make room for her. She had not seemed to pine away nor sicken, nor had she foreboded the end as near. She was only a little duller, quieter, less fond of the sunshine, in those last months. That was all. But she never used to come trotting down the hill to our house in the early freshness, leaning on her slender ivory-topped cane, with Tackett jerking along beside her, bearing a little basket, roofed over with green leaves and brimful of extra fine white currants or glistening black mulberries for "the children's" breakfast. Nor did I ever see her in that bright autumn weather, busied as usual with old Sam the gardener, in the little flower-plot across the road before her house.

When the great winds came with the falling leaves, and the heavy wet fir-branches began

dashing against our walls at night, and the fierce blasts came scurrying in at door and window, and rocking the chimneys on the roof, dear Aunt Bella grew chilly and dozy, and would creep into the chimney-corner, and sit there silent, for hours, with a large soft grey shawl drawn over her head, and wrapping her whole body in its folds. We saw then how thin she had grown, and how feeble; and when, a few weeks after that, she took to lingering late in bed, and then stayed there altogether, still uncomplaining, day after day, we felt that she was surely leaving us and pushing quietly out from shore into the sunlight of that "blessed hope" of which she had so often told us.

So she went away, very peacefully and gradually, but never pausing to look back or recover any of the ground she had lost. The closing days of her existence were painless, and passed chiefly in sleep; there seemed no reason why she should die, except that her light of life had dwindled down and nothing seemed to rekindle it. The last words I ever heard her speak were uttered in the dusk of the evening before her death, when, tearfully kneeling at her bedside, I folded my hands over hers, lying listlessly outside the quilt, and heard her whisper to herself, "Boonie's little hand; God bless her!"

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PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER XI. MAJOR CARTER.

A RIM of low old-fashioned little houses, like dolls'-houses, runs round a sort of hexagonal tea-board-shaped patch of green, called Haus-place, just at the back of Sloane-street. A slumbering monotony reigns here. The hall doors are tight, and have a huddled hunchback air, and the houses themselves are squeezed close, like a crowd at a show where room is precious, and where stewards have been seen making people move up. Major Carter and his son had now three rooms in one of these little houses—the parlour story and a cold little warren at the top, where the roof began to slope inconveniently just over the deal dressing-table. The major had seen troubles of late; things had not gone smoothly with him. "Poor Mrs. Carter's long illness was a heavy 'draw' upon us," he used to say. "She required many comforts, and all the care we could give her. Our doctor said change of air—keep moving about: and she had change of air, poor soul! I am not as rich as I was, and I am not ashamed to own it."

Heavy business matters, too, were entailed on the major by the death of his wife—what he called "winding up her affairs" (in the Irrefragable Company), kept him in Hans-place. He had to watch those fellows, who were treating him in a shabby unhandsome fashion. Otherwise, town was not nearly so suited to the major's life as the little realm of a watering-place. There he had everything under his hand: he could cover them all with his hat. "We were more thrown together there," he said. "Some of the pleasantest days of my life were spent at Eastport."

But there was yet another attraction. A stout round red and wealthy lady, called Mrs. Wrigley, had a house in Cadogan-place, where, having twenty years before decently interred Joseph Wrigley, Esquire, Chairman of the United Bank, she lived in quiet and substantial splendour, and swung about London in a quaint old chariot. As the late chairman had been what is called "universally respected," so his relict was as sincerely admired. She was the object of many gallantries from young gentlemen and men of a

more "suitable" age; and she treated these worshippers with mature coquetties, which did not seem in the least out of place, and were conventionally accepted by the circle in which she moved, as quite becoming. Youths struggled who should "take her down"—i.e. to supper; and at parties younger pairs were often detained at the foot of the stairs, while she slowly passed down the straits, a sort of human reproduction of Turner's "Fighting Téméraire" towed to her last Berth" by a light military tug.

Yet with these worldly condiments she mixed a little religious seasoning. Until she came to know Major Carter, she affected the society of the Reverend Punsher Hill, a dissenting clergyman of a strong spiritual flavour, whose chapel was in the Chelsea district. There he poured out streams of holy hartshorn—the very Preston salts of divinity—and "drew" large crowds. With him was combined, in her society, a clergyman of the more established ritual, who sprinkled ess-bouquet and rose-water from his pulpit, and made everything pleasant.

For these gentlemen a sort of "main" of tea was kept flowing in Cadogan-place. The odium theologicum did not, as it ought to have done, hinder their assimilating or balancing Mrs. Wrigley symmetrically on each side, as though they were "supporters" for her arms. She had contributed handsomely to Mr. Punsher Hill's new conventicle, built for him by admirers of his Preston salts, which was called "Mount Horeb;" and she had given moneys to Mr. Hoblush for what he called his "visiting women." A "delightful young man," said many; "too long expended on the rural districts, now happily given up to the vast fields of missionary labour, which lie in the uncleared country of drawing-rooms, and among the pretty soft tulle-clad natives, all more or less benighted."

These two influences reigned until she came to know Major Carter. That worldling gradually began to undermine her faith, or at least her warm devotion. She was too good natured to feel any change, or show any change; but the worldling had more force of character than the two spiritualists. They felt themselves slipping as on a parquet floor, and soon the success of Major Carter was so marked, as to attract public whispers, and public attention, and public murmurs, and public anger.

She was delighted with Major Carter's quiet air of the world, with his calm "weight" of manner, and readiness of speech. The others seemed untrained children near him. When his cold eye fell upon them, the two clergymen did not like the sensation.

One little transaction firmly established him as suggesting the association of intellectual power, and the command of men's minds. The two clergymen were sitting with her one afternoon, when the "main" of tea had been laid on. Mr. Punsher Hill's figure was round, coarse, and Jersey pear-shaped. It was like a Scal in clerical attire. His face was red and brawn-like, and his throat but awkwardly confined in heavy folds of linen. But Mr. Hoblush's spiritual dress, and the figure which that dress enclosed, was all elegance. It was shapely, uncreased, unfolded, and unwrinkled. His coat or mantle seemed to flow downwards, and with such a low full grace, that there seemed a hint—a sort of little artifice—as of an apron present. His voice was soft and tender. He could not sing, but he played "a little" on the violoncello.

Major Carter came in as they were busy on the "Mount Horeb" Chapel. The Rev. Alfred Hoblush was tolerant of all denominations. But Mrs. Wrigley was not so interested in these matters as she used to be. She talked to them of Lord Puttenham's coming music.

"I have done what I could," said the Rev. Alfred, sweetly, "but I have not sufficient interest. I would give the world to be there myself."

As for Mr. Hill, it was understood, without allusion, that *his* walks were not the Puttenham walks. No reference was made to him.

Suddenly entered the worldling Carter, who began to chatter airily and delightfully on mundane topics—bringing in a little legend about Lady Mantower and Mrs. Weynam Lake—serving them delicately to Mrs. Wrigley as though they had been morsels of warm toast spread with marrow. The clergy present looked at him ruefully. "All the world," continued the worldling, "is crowding to this Puttenham party, and his wife, of course. More the wife, perhaps, than the world;" and then he worked this text pleasurably and fluently for a half-hour, and then rose to go. He put his head in again. "By the way, Mrs. Wrigley," he said, "I had a message, which I had forgotten. Strictly in private, though." He whispered, "I have ventured on a great liberty, but that is all right—the Puttenham affair, you know. It will come to-night. But a profound secret, I stipulate that."

The surpassing delicacy with which Major Carter had transacted this little affair—his anticipation of her wishes—from that hour established his supremacy.

CHAPTER XII. LORD PUTNENHAM'S LITTLE PARTY.

THE Town knew Lord Puttenham very well. He was sometimes darkly mentioned as the "noble Amateur." He was a musical lord, had played "a little," i.e. execrably, on a hoary Cremona

violin, and gave a little musical senate laws. There was no Lady Puttenham, and so, through his fine house in Dover-street, strange and protracted agonies were heard, as of a maiden wailing, which was the musical lord busy with his "scales;" and in the musical house sheets of music lay tossed here and there, high and dry on chairs and cabinets, floating wildly on the carpet, as though there had been a wreck, and a great musical Indianman had gone to pieces in the drawing-room. The musical lord going about on duty, sat as a musical magistrate, and had cases brought before him, on which he passed judgment. New harmonious gipsies, eager to get a hearing, and who had brought either a voice, or a fiddle, or a whistle, from the Continent, were led away to him, and adjudicated on. His head lay so much on one side with this listening, that the attitude became habitual and normal; and on occasions of extraordinary attention he listened with his head erect. Yet he was a florid, round, selfish, and practically useless nobleman. With all his audiences, his whispering in corners, his taking of buttons and button-holes, his shrugs, his showering of criticism and musical terms as from a dredger, he never did any good for any new or wandering artist. And when one had, with infinite struggling, rowed into public favour, the musical lord came paddling at the stern with a little car no bigger than a fan, and really enjoyed the credit of having contributed largely to the success.

In the large mansion in Dover-street, the musical Lord Puttenham gave entertainments, which were known mysteriously as "rich musical treats." These were a sort of dry Trappist matinées, and evening "réunions," where the board was spread with music, and music only; and the tables groaned with quaver entrées, and light crotchet hors d'œuvres, and a sparkling presto, served as champagne. Lord Puttenham always bewailed the decay of classical music, and did his best to restore it; and if a sort of "service," that lasted hours, the close to which was marked by the flutter of the turning of the twentieth page; and if faces of agony, and jaws hanging wearily, and mournful rustling on chairs, and acute pains about the spine, and welcome drowsiness (with some), and strange cerebral confusion (with others), and something like incipient idiocy (with one or two); if this was restoring classical music, Lord Puttenham did so effectually on every one of his "second Thursdays."

Strange to say, people came eagerly, nay, struggled to come. People of fashion, and people of quality, and people with daughters—like Lady Laura Fermor. Wise and wary woman! She saw that the soil was soft enough for rillepits. She saw that, from the hopeless and dispiriting character of the place, the warriors and chiefs would be driven in perforce upon what entertainment *she* could offer; and that in the arid desert character of the country, *her*

daughters would stand out with an artificial attraction, from the force of contrast. Noble—zealous—almost chivalrous commander! What she suffered in the way of austerities—for cane chairs, affording rude and imperfect support, were brought in, to economise space—will never be known. If holding out her poor arm day and night, and keeping her fingers closed till the nails grew through the palms—according to the Brahmin practice—could have helped forward her mission, she would have done it cheerfully. She did not know Lord Puttenham, but she soon “reached” him; and though the girls could move their ivory keys in the same rude way that they had learned the “dumb-bell” practice and the “pole” exercise at Madame Cartier’s, and the graceful handling of the mallet—still they had qualified sufficiently, and could be rapturous in musical praise without falling into blunders.

On a certain second Thursday all the world was there. For weeks before, the Puttenham head, well to one side, had whispered, and hinted, and shrugged, of a new artist that he was bringing out: “A young Hungarian fellow, by Jove; heard him last summer, in a common cabaret at Prague, absolutely a Com-mon cabaret. I never heard ‘Tone’ before. A very unassuming young fellow. And I have got him to come to England. He will coin. He will put them all out—Santon and the whole gang. It was the merest chance I just turned in there. Otherwise, he would have been fiddling away to Boors and Beer, for the rest of his life. I *think* I know what Tone is; and I say distinctly, Tone has never been heard until now!”

As Lord Puttenham spoke thus at his own drawing-room, a faint echo from behind said, softly: “Tone never been heard till now!” And the registered owner of the echo was Vasi, a musical aide-de-camp on his staff. Vasi was professional, and a sort of Italian Englishman, who was the real chain that bound the musical lord to the actual professional world. He had what he called musical “circles” of his own, where there was genuine music provided, and genuine music paid for; and Lord Puttenham he found useful as a fine ground where he could pick up fashionable subscribers. A melodious duke or two, an harmonious earl, had been seen moving their heads with accurate beat, in time to the lively rhythm of an “Allegro Vivace,” the Promised Land coming into sight after months of wandering in sterile “Adagios.”

Lord Puttenham had far more ladies than men coming to have the torture applied. Men did not suffer the “Little Ease” so cheerfully. They were restless. Once, indeed, three ill-conditioned “cavalry fellows,” who had got shut hopelessly in the heart of the cane chairs, and not being trained to habits of restraint, rose at the end of a “maestoso,” and rudely and loudly and conspicuously forced their way out through the company, causing great confusion. One was heard at the door using what Lord Puttenham called “a ribald expression,” and which sounded

in the key of “utter rot!” “From that moment,” said Lord Puttenham, “I have made it a rule never to ask any of those soldier people.”

“Won’t you have an Analysis, Lady Laura?” said Lord Puttenham, handing her one. “We have a ‘rich treat’ to-night. Only one daughter, I declare! Now, now!”

“We knew,” said Lady Laura, “how precious space was to-night. We left poor Alicia Mary whose *passion* is music. We shall get no seat, my dear” (this aside to Blanche), “if you, don’t move on.”

The place looked like the Tuileries Gardens, there were so many cane chairs. It was crowded. Major Carter had, somehow, managed to “get” to the party, by clambering with infinite pains and heat and difficulty up into a tree. Still he was there among the leaves and branches like the rest of the company. The fashionable paper had his name, also that of Young Brett, and of Captain and Mrs. Fermor. Miss Manuel had merely said to the noble host: “You must give me a few blank cards for those I like,” and a whole sheaf had arrived.

Mrs. Fermor had welcomed this promised treat with delight. She enjoyed music, and even the homily-like classical music. “Oh, Charles,” she said, “how kind of her, how charming, how we shall enjoy it.”

Fermor was still icy, and had plans of his own for that night. “I think you had better not go. It is really too great a tax upon a stranger. We could scarcely go upon such an invitation. If you like to go yourself with Miss Manuel—”

“O no, no. And you think so? But,” she added, a little quickly, and her cheeks beginning to glow, “I suppose the same argument will apply to us both!”

“Not at all,” said he, colouring too. “You don’t quite follow me.”

This looked like the beginning of the cold skirmishings which lead to incompatibility. Mrs. Fermor went to her room, ready to cry like a child, or like a girl, as she was. But they both went after all. Grim Mr. Carlay came stalking down from his rooms on the stairs: he somehow heard weeping, and appeared before Fermor in his study. The metal in his face seemed to have assumed a greater tightness and density. There was an air and manner about him that was irresistible. His remonstrances—for they were only remonstrances—seemed to be edicts. They went together; but Fermor went chafing, as though he had been a free man chained to a convict, whom he must take with him.

When they got there the concert had begun. They had arrived at the “Grand Posthumous Quatuor in E minor,” which was being interpreted by these four artists:

Ragwitz Béla

Krowski,

Snaart (alto),

and M. Piletti (cello).

Ragwitz Béla was the young violinist whom the host had discovered in the “pothouse.”

They had travelled many posts, at a sort of steady amble, along a high road "moderato," until they reached the last bar, when it was thought they would draw rein and bait. But Lady Laura, who had scoured end chairs for her party, a judicious coigne of 'vantage, and who already was suffering mental and physical pain, and had been glancing wearily, from side to side, now sadly convinced that a harem-like seclusion was indeed to prevail, saw with a sudden sinking of the heart, each page "turned back," and the four artists begin their journey again. It was a "repeat." When the stage was happily accomplished, there was a little pause, and Lord Puttenham led off applause, with interjections of "What tone! I never heard tone before!" Then came an entreating "Hus-sh!" for the "quatuor" had recovered its instruments, and was proceeding into the "adagio."

This might be described to be a musical interment—they proceeded at such a slow and mournful walk—Ragwitz Béla leading and drawing out wailing strokes with contortionate agonies—sometimes laying his fiddle like a dish under his own throat, as though he were anxious to decollate himself on the spot; sometimes quivering and straining as though he wished to drive his fiddle into his neck and lay it finally against the short joints of the spine; sometimes struggling with it, sometimes beckoning with it; sometimes making spasms with his knee and foot, as though he wished to rise and fly through the air with it. The others went to the work gloomily, and with awful concentration; and Piletti, who had charge of the violincello, seemed to have a conveniently-shaped coffin between his knees.

The mortuary music was at last over. Lady Laura, already worn and haggard, but still "coming up smiling," was feeling the cane pressure acutely. Poor soul! she was old and tall of figure, and required little comforts at home and abroad, not the rafter-like support imparted by cane chairs. Yet she smiled on, and took care that smiling should be kept up in the ranks; and when Providence at last brought the "first part" to a conclusion, she had a smile for Lord Puttenham drifting by her, and an ejaculation of ecstasy, "How lovely! Did you ever hear anything like it?"

A light and airy repast (as though the host was belonging to a severe Order) was laid on the stairs; and yet the company poured out and flung themselves on it with an avidity that seemed to hint that they had been shipwrecked, and newly taken off a rock.

Mrs. Fermor sat penned up on a centre chair, her eyes fixed on Ragwitz Béla, whom she thought divine. Miss Manuel was in another part, while Fermor made part of a small crowd, herded together at the door.

Rude persons were pressing on him; and early in the night, when he was whispering a pleasant sarcasm to Young Bridges, Lord Puttenham had tapped him bluntly on the shoulder,

and said, rather roughly, "You must go outside if you want to talk." He was looking over at Miss Manuel—looking sourly—for sitting beside her was that "low, ill-bred, insolent" Mr. Romaine, who had been so forward at the brougham door.

At this happy release—the end of the first part—Mr. Romaine left Miss Manuel, and came over to Mrs. Fermor. A cane chair creaked as he dropped into it. Fermor was about offering to take down Miss Manuel, when Lord Puttenham, just behind him, touched him on the arm: "Beg pardon, let me pass, please. Miss Manuel, come!" And Miss Manuel went away gaily on Lord Puttenham's arm.

As she passed Mrs. Fermor she stooped down and whispered, "Be kind to poor Romaine to-night. He is afraid of you. He is to be pitied, poor fellow. Guess who are here—the Massingers, who were to have been in Rome. You will, I am sure." And pressing her arm affectionately, she passed on.

"You are still angry," said Mr. Romaine; "I can see it. Yet I am the one who ought to suffer, after that awful onslaught on me the other day."

Mrs. Fermor bit her red lip, but smiled in spite of herself. "You began," she said.

"I know," he said; "I always begin. Every man and every woman tells me so. And yet I cannot help it. I am worried and tried. No one understands me, or, of course, tries to understand me. Why should they, indeed?"

Mrs. Fermor looked at him with bright and sympathising eyes.

"You judge us all very harshly," she said; "we are not all so bad as you think."

"Why not?" he said. "I begin to hate the world. I used to believe in it. I found my account in it, for I never accepted the rubbish about a 'hollow world,' and its faithlessness, and that cant. But now I feel shaken. I have seen something to-night that has shaken me. If that faith has left me, I have nothing to trust to."

Mrs. Fermor was filled with a sort of missionary enthusiasm. She thought how, in her own weak way, she might confirm and strengthen this strange being.

"I can feel for you," she said, softly, "indeed I can. But I would not give way, if you would listen to me. I would fight bravely—as I know you have done," she added, colouring a little at her own boldness; "you would struggle on, and you would find strength as you went on, and you would, at the end, conquer, and conquer splendidly. You should do that, Mr. Romaine, and you would be helped by the sympathies of your friends."

She was quite excited, and he looked at her half astonished, half interested. The look, however, was gradually gliding into a sneer. "But no," he said, "I won't. I was going to be sarcastic about 'struggles,' &c., but I won't. Thank you. I really do thank you for your advice. Not that I think it will profit me, for I am past that, but I thank you all the same."

"But," she went on more eagerly still, "you must let it profit you. You will try, I am sure. A little will do it. It is only a sacrifice, and we must all make sacrifices."

"Well," he said, a little roughly, "and I was willing to make sacrifices. I went through it all, and suffered, God knows how much. No matter! the thing was done, and here is the whole thing to begin again. But I forgot, you don't know what I am talking of."

"But I do," said Mrs. Fermor, with a naïve toss of her head. "I have heard, and, indeed, I sympathise."

"Well, so far, at least, I have done well—for to-night I mean—come!" said Mr. Romaine.

"Yes," said she, "but you must go on; we must encourage you."

"It is very hard," he said with a sigh. "Look over there and say if it is not very hard."

Mrs. Fermor looked over, with great curiosity, and saw a fair snowy girl—a little insipid, perhaps—"crean laid"—but tall and fair, sitting and smiling, and receiving polite adoration from two gentlemen.

"There!" said Mr. Romaine, bitterly; "that was once my Marguerite. She has married Valentine after all, and become homely. Look at him over there—Fatuity incorporate! Yet Valentine is restless and troubled in his mind. He doesn't relish Marguerite's doings. I almost wish he may be more troubled yet."

"Hush, hush," said Mrs. Fermor, with coquettish reproof. "You have promised to struggle, recollect."

"And how am I to do it? I am alone. I have no one to help me—to encourage me."

Mrs. Fermor smiled.

"We will all do our best. That is not much, but we will try."

"If," said Mr. Romaine looking at her fixedly, "there was any one who would bear with me, and talk with me, and whisper good things now and again, and say kind words of encouragement when I felt my strength giving way—" He stopped and waited a moment.

With great eagerness, and longing to make a neophyte of him, and have the glory of converting one of these rude rough splendidly savage men, Mrs. Fermor said, with a smile, that she would be glad to have this Samaritan office now and again.

Alas! This was but a fatal species of missionary labour. And Miss Manuel, sweeping by on Lord Puttenham's arm to her chair, saw the two faces close together, and the little innocent delight in Mrs. Fermor's, and a sort of flash of triumph in the other's. Behind Miss Manuel was walking Nemesis, like a page.

CHAPTER XIII. A DISCOVERY AND A MISSION.

YOUNG BRETT did not come that night until late. Miss Manuel had been looking for him, and beckoned to him from the door, where he had made one of the herd. He flew to her. "Sit down beside me," she said. "Get that chair."

A lady, with the true selfishness which is roused by chairs, and chairs only, was adroitly spreading herself over two chairs, which she seemed to occupy debatably—not wholly on or wholly off. Another claimant she would have frozen off with look, manner, and answer. But there was a good-humoured graciousness about Young Brett which saved him, and a sort of homage which she took as payment for the chair. He was allowed to take it.

"My dear child," said Miss Manuel, "you have been always so true, and so kind, and so faithful to me, and to us all, that I would ask of you things that I would not ask of others. Would you do something for me now—something very troublesome, and very important?"

"O," said Young Brett, in a tumult of gratitude—it was as though she had accepted the gun at last—"how kind, how good of you! Now you are making me happy. What is it?"

She was indeed making him happy. For months he had been panting to get an opportunity to do something for her. He thought it was money, and he had plunged his hand eagerly into his pocket.

Miss Manuel smiled. "No, no," she said, "not that. Then I may tell you? Would you go on a journey for me?"

Young Brett half jumped up. "Is that it? To be sure. When—now? Though—O my goodness!" and his face fell. "I have to join the day after to-morrow. What shall I do!"

"Join, of course," said she, good humouredly. "I must go myself—I shall not get any one else."

"But I must go," said he, in real distress. "I shall manage it—leave it to me. I know some one that will get it—and if they don't, why—I am beginning to get very tired of the whole business—and—"

"Not for the world!" said she, in real alarm. "You must not think of it."

"But I see how it can be done," he said, joyfully, "and without that. Leave it to me. Where do you want me to go to?"

"First, then," said she, "it is to be secret. The place is Beaumaris, in Wales, and the house is called Bangor House, looking on the green. Now, I want you to go down, lodge there for a week or ten days, and find out all about the people who lodged there before—that is, seven or eight months ago. It will be useful for me to know. Mind, everything. Everything will be welcome, and everything useful. Will you think it cruelly unreasonable to do this?"

She saw delight in his face, and gratitude too, for being chosen for such a mission.

"This is really kind," he said; "I was getting so bored with London. I was really thinking of a week at Bangor, or some of those places. It just falls in nicely—that is, I mean," he added, growing grave as he thought of his first statement, "if I had got leave."

"Hu-sh!" came from Lord Puttenham; "no talking, please!"

In fact, the second part was beginning, and Ragwitz Béla was now giving his great Hungarian solo, Verbocsy Czárdás, in which he first "agoured," and swung, and shocked, and wailed, and quivered through a "largo appassionato," and presently was plucking, and tearing, and mangling his strings (as though they had been his own hair) through ten terrible spasms, called "variations." He worried his violin as though it were a rat; he seemed to long to bring his teeth into play, and to work at it with that extra power. He dug his fingers into its bowels, and seemed to root and tear at its heart. He made it yell and groan; and, at the end of each variation, tucked it violently under his arm, as it were to smother it up like a child, and mopped his face and hands in moist exhaustion. This was Ragwitz Béla and his solo, which at last happily ended.

Later on, Mr. Romaine was looking with interest on his pleasant little missionary. Said he to her, with a sort of low plaintive music he would throw into his voice; "I have a rude log-house of my own, rude and unfurnished as myself. Civilised people call it Chamber. There I can be as lonely and as savage as I like. Sometimes the Charitable come and see me, and relieve my wants. I have curiosities to show—something that would amuse. At least, people tell me so. I could get your friend Miss Manuel to come, and if you would care to meet her there to-morrow evening, say at five—"

But Mrs. Fermor shrunk away from this scheme. Alarm came into her face. Mr. Romaine was hurrying on too fast, and this was being too bold. She answered coldly, and yet with agitation:

"No, no. I never go anywhere in *that* way. Don't ask me, please. No, I am very sorry."

She seemed to awake suddenly. All the new Missionary Ordination had gone for nothing. Mr. Romaine did not relish any plan of his being rejected; so he rose hastily, and flung himself on his feet. "Very well," he said. "With all my heart. I am sorry. But it can't be helped." He stalked away to the door. ("He is a dangerous person," thought Mrs. Fermor, looking after him in dread.) At the door he passed Miss Manuel.

"Poor Romaine!" she said. "Keep up your heart. Things will go better another time, and in another direction. But recollect, I warned you! You think a little too highly of yourself!"

"I shall not go with you to supper to-night," he said. "At least, I have half determined not to. But it is not over yet, *that* little business."

Lady Laura Fermor had sat unto the end—would have sat had it been hours longer. Faithful captain! She had ceased to suffer pain. A sort of dull numbness came on. You would have said she was enjoying pleasure, for she hung out mechanical smiles, like Signs, at regular intervals. And she found her reward. For the youth, Lord Spendlesham, whose father was happily dead (within three months, but the boy had really shown feeling in

keeping himself retired so long), was there in decent black gloves, and had actually got to a chair beside Blanche. He was rich, empty, vain, and foolish—a combination of good qualities that Lady Laura always admired.

At the end of Lord Puttenham's musical party, Miss Manuel was at the door, on the inside, and people, as they passed, had little flying "chats," each no longer than ten seconds. That night she was to have one of her compact little suppers, and she was enrolling a few. Young Brett, with confidence and the brightness of hope on his little forehead, posted past her. There was meaning in his eyes. She was talking with Westley Kerr, an agreeable man, when Young Brett said, meaningly, as he passed, and with secret mystery:

"Bangor House, Beaumaris—all right, Miss Manuel!" and she smiled to him that he was right.

But the next instant a face was put round the door from the outside—Major Carter's face, but so drawn and contorted, so contracted with fury, terror, and wonder, that Miss Manuel hardly knew it. It was laid against the sill of the door and came close to hers.

"Take care," he said. And though the voice was low and hoarse, he wore the old trained smile. "Take care, I warn you! What you are doing is dangerous. I tell you in time, take care, or—"

"Take care!" said Lord Puttenham's cheery voice, "what is Miss Manuel to take care of, Carter?"

"Of the draught, my lord," said Major Carter, pleasantly. "Standing in these doorways is a little perilous. I give warning in time always."

A flash of fire passed from Miss Manuel's eyes direct to his face. "I have a strong constitution," she said, "and fear nothing!"

EARTH.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

On the 24th of May, 1863, Herr Otto Lidenbrock, Professor at the Johanneum of Hamburg, hurried home to No. 19, Königstrasse, with a precious acquisition under his arm—a marvellous old volume, the *Heims-Kringla*, or Chronicle of Norwegian Princes who reigned in Iceland, by Snorre Turleson, the famous Icelandic author of the twelfth century.

While displaying this treasure to his nephew Axel, there dropped out of it a slip of parchment inscribed with Runic characters. The Runic being changed for Roman letters, a series of unintelligible words was the result, which evidently formed a cryptogram or intelligence conveyed in a secret form. The author of the cryptogram was probably some former possessor of the book; and on one corner of the fly-leaf was discovered in Runic letters the name of Arne Saknussem, a learned Icelandic alchemist and traveller who flourished in the middle of the sixteenth century.

In vain did the Professor cudgel his brains to read the Runic cryptogram. He deprived himself of food and sleep; and the harder he tried to interpret it, the more utter nonsense it became. At last, by mere chance, young Axel discovered that, by turning it upside down, and reading it so, it stated, in dog Latin, "Descend, adventurous traveller, into that crater of the extinct Yocul, Sneffels, on which the shadow of Scartaris falls at noon during the Calends of July, and you will reach the centre of the earth: Which I have done. Arne Saknussemm."

The ardent Professor resolved forthwith to undertake the expedition; and compelled his reluctant nephew to join him in this novel excursion. Their travels from Hamburg to, and in, Iceland, though interesting, are irrelevant to the present paper. They engaged one Hans Bjelke, a collector of eider-down by trade, and a giant in strength, to accompany them as factotum and guide, and safely reached the craters of Sneffels. On a neighbouring rock, the words "Arne Saknussemm," carved in Runic letters, assured them they were on the right road; and on the 28th of June the shadow of Scartaris fell on the orifice which was to conduct them to the centre of the globe.

Slipping from rock to rock by the help of ropes, they reached the bottom of a perpendicular chimney, three thousand feet deep, where they passed the night. Their non-fragile luggage had been simply thrown down; the rest they carried on their backs, like walking tourists. A lava gallery, branching off to the east, turned out a blind-alley, in spite of their Ruhmkorff electrical lanterns. They retraced their steps, and took another tunnel which sloped to the west. While striding down this, at a rapid pace, their water fell short. Hans smote the rock with his pickaxe, when out gushed a boiling spring, which sorely scalded their hands and lips. They had then only to follow it, until it cooled down into Hansbach, and so became potable. It was their fountain, their companion, and their guide, leading from the lowest depths to lower still, for days and days. Somewhere hereabouts, Axel lost at once, himself, the water-course, and his lantern; notwithstanding which, he opened telegraphic communication with his uncle, by acoustic means resembling those which have endowed St. Paul's with a whispering-gallery. Groping in the dark to rejoin his friends, he fell, slipped, and was shot down an inclined plane of unknown length, until he lost consciousness. This he regained in a grotto suffused with soft light, under the careful treatment of the Professor and Hans, and at a depth (warranted;—see the calculations) of one hundred miles below the earth's surface. They had experienced only a slight increase of heat; therefore, in the uncle's opinion, no central fire exists. Volcanic, and other like phenomena, according to him, are nothing but the chemical effects of inflammable metals coming in contact with air and water. The nephew, in spite of these extraordinary discoveries, would never renounce his belief that the earth's nucleus is still on fire.

When Axel was well enough to leave his grotto, he found himself on the shore of a sea which its discoverer chose to name the Lidenbrock. A vast sheet of water, the extremity of a lake or ocean, stretched far out of sight. The waves broke on a sandy beach with the sonorous murmur peculiar to the interiors of very large edifices. The shore was bounded by buttresses of rock which rose to an immeasurable height. Every detail of the picture was brought out by singular effects of light—not the light of the sun with his brilliant beams, nor the pale and uncertain glimmer of the moon, which is merely a reflexion devoid of heat. The illuminating power here, by its tremulous diffusion, its dry and clear whiteness, and its moderate temperature, betrayed its purely electrical origin. It was a sort of aurora borealis—a continuation of a cosmical phenomenon—which pervaded this cavern capable of containing a sea. But the word cavern conveys no idea of the immensity of the hollow. The vault overhead, the sky if you will, seemed composed of large clouds and changeable vapours, which, by the effects of condensation, must at certain times fall in torrential rains. That day the weather was fine. Electric sheets produced a wonderful play of light on the highest clouds; but it was not sunshine. The effect was the reverse of cheerful—melancholy rather. Instead of a firmament spangled with brilliant stars, above the clouds there was felt to exist a vault of granite which seemed to crush you with its weight. In short, the adventurers were imprisoned in an enormous excavation. Neither its length nor its breadth could be guessed at. The eye soon found itself arrested by a vague and undecided horizon. Its height evidently exceeded several leagues.

Walking round a promontory, they fell upon a group of lofty, colourless, umbrella-shaped trees. Currents of air seemed to have no effect upon their branches, which remained as motionless as those of petrified cedars. On approaching nearer, the Professor discovered them to be gigantic mushrooms, thirty or forty feet high. There they were, by thousands, standing so thick that complete obscurity reigned beneath their fleshy domes. There were also lycopods of phenomenal dimensions, tree ferns, giant sigillarias, forked lepidodendrons, and the whole flora of the second epoch of the world, the period of transition. Never did living botanist enjoy such a treat before.

And where was this wonderful sea? Horizontally, it was distant three hundred and fifty leagues from Iceland, at a vertical depth of forty leagues, exactly under the Grampian Hills. In spite of all its novelty, the explorers led a monotonous life. The air being constantly luminous, day and night were both alike. So they built a raft, with the intention of crossing the sea. On the raft, they amused themselves with fishing, and caught fish belonging to families which, on earth, have been extinct for ages. Moreover, all their specimens were blind; and not blind only, but absolutely deprived of organs

of sight—a peculiarity sometimes met with in the inhabitants of subterranean waters.

During their passage, they nearly caught a tartar, in the shape of a living ichthyosaurus, an antediluvian monster with the snout of a porpoise, the head of a lizard, and the teeth of a crocodile. Luckily, its attention was diverted from the raft by the appearance of its sworn enemy, a plesiosaurus—a serpent thirty feet long, with a tortoise's shell forty feet wide, and great goggle eyes as big as your head. This pretty pair, closing with admirable pluck, fought an unrecorded number of rounds for a couple of hours. At last, by a clever dodge, the ichthyosaurus gave the decisive blow, and left his adversary for dead.

After this episode, the raft was assailed by a storm, which drove them back to a point near their starting-place. On landing, they were startled by finding on the sand—not, like Robinson Crusoe, a footprint—but a dagger of the sixteenth century. A human visitor had, therefore, preceded them. But who? A rock close by, carved with the Runic letters A. S., proved that it must have been Arne Saknussemm himself. Onward, then, to follow his steps! How did he get away from the Subterranean Sea? Evidently, down this gallery, which is closed by a fallen mass of rock. The rock must be blown up by gun-cotton.

When all was ready to spring the mine, the adventurous three set light to the match, and then, retreating to their raft, pushed out from shore to a prudent distance. The match had been calculated to burn ten minutes. The Professor, chronometer in hand, anxiously awaited the result of the explosion. "Five minutes more," he said, "and then!—Four minutes!—Three!—Two!—In one minute—"

Whether their ears heard the explosion, the travellers could never remember. The form of the surrounding rocks suddenly changed. They opened like a curtain, and displayed a yawning abyss, dark, fathomless, into which the sea poured, like a monster Niagara, carrying with it the raft and its burden. In less than a second, light gave place to utter darkness. The travellers clung together in despair. For hours they were carried down by the torrent, with a speed to which the swiftest railway rates are sluggishness. They turned their backs to the air through which they rushed, to avoid being suffocated. They glided no more; they fell, with still increasing velocity. Suddenly, after an interval of time which they could not estimate, they felt a sort of shock. The raft, without meeting any solid obstacle, was suddenly arrested in its course. An immense sheet of water drenched its surface. The explorers were choked—all but drowned. Nevertheless, the inundation did not last. Their lungs again breathed the air freely. They held together bravely; the raft still carried all the three—and they had reached the centre of the globe! How they got back (for they did get back) to the surface, the reader will learn by perusing M. Jules Verne's *Voyage au Centre de*

la Terre: of whose scenery, spirit, and science, this slight summary gives but a faint idea.

For a less flighty excursion into the interior we must gain the foot of Mont Cenis, where men are boldly grappling with one horn of an awkward dilemma. The railway is complete from Paris to Turin, except over Mont Cenis, which is still traversed by horse-power instead of steam.

But the piercing of Mont Cenis by a tunnel presents simply a choice between two difficulties. By taking the high and circuitous line, the railway would have to mount to the region of snow-storms and avalanches. During a great part of the year it would be dangerous and impracticable, unless protected by a covered gallery, the expense of which would be very great. Such a railway, with such a gallery, though more quickly executed than a tunnel, would stand in need of constant repair, and with every precaution must at times be unsafe. On the other hand, a tunnel once bored through a mountain of rock, would last for ever. It was resolved to undertake the tunnel.

But the tunnel of Mont Cenis, or rather of the Col de Fréjus (for, if the road passes over the Col of Mont Cenis, the railway will pass under the Col of Fréjus), offered special difficulties. Most tunnels can be attacked at several points of their course at once, by sinking wells or galleries, which serve both for ventilation and the extraction of excavated material. When the fragments of the tunnel are all joined, the whole is finished. But in piercing such a mass as Mont Cenis, wells or slanting galleries were next to impossible. The tunnel could be begun at two places only, namely, at each end: and the further it advances, the greater is the difficulty of introducing fresh air and extracting the rubbish. New methods of piercing the rock and of ventilation had to be invented. Its projectors might well have been excused for renouncing the accomplishment of a subterranean gallery twelve thousand metres, or seven miles and a half, in length.

Attempts were made to do without powder for blasting the rock, in order to avoid the vitiation of the air consequent on explosions. Boring the rock by steam power was proposed; but the steam-engine also consumes oxygen. It ended in using sportsmen's instead of miners' gunpowder, and by boring the blast-holes with a machine set in motion by air compressed with the force of six atmospheres. The air is compressed by pumps worked by the waterfalls, of which there is no want. Gas-lamps have been substituted with advantage for oil-lamps; gun-cotton has been thought of to replace gunpowder; and sucking-pumps to draw out the foul air through long tubes.

The extraction of the rubbish is very slow work. At the distance of from a thousand to fifteen hundred metres from the mouth of the tunnel, it requires about six hours, including in that period about two hours for firing the mines; which time will increase as the distance increases. The boring of the holes is performed

three times as quickly by machinery as by the ordinary methods. The tunnel is excavated, by machinery only, three metres high and three metres wide; its final dimensions are intended to be eight metres high and ten broad. By what means it is to be so enlarged, still remains undecided. During 1862, on an average, a metre per day was excavated at each end, or two metres altogether. The ten thousand metres which remain to be excavated will therefore, at that rate, take something like twelve years to finish. Six years have already been employed on the tunnel; the whole time of its execution will consequently be eighteen years. At first, it was expected to be finished in six years. But eighteen years, a large portion of the life of an individual, are as nothing in the life of a nation. Many cathedrals and other public monuments have taken a much longer time to complete.

To supplant the old-fashioned borer, M. Leschot has invented a tool which consists of a metal ring studded with fragments of black diamond—a harder variety than the ordinary diamond—and which is therefore employed to polish it. The ring, by means of a cylindrical stem worked by machinery, is made to grind an annular hole in the rock. When the hole is nearly a yard deep, the tool is withdrawn, and what remains inside the hole is easily extracted. Thus a gem, usually employed for personal decoration, has rendered industrial services, and has become an auxiliary in the making of a railway. Instead of employing diamond or steel, Hannibal is said to have opened rocks by the application of vinegar. All we can say is, that the vinegar of that day must have been considerably stronger than our own.

The latest intelligence informs us that the public impatience is not likely to wait even ten years for the completion of the Alpine tunnel; but that, until it be finally opened, a temporary and provisional railway is to be carried over the mountain. The locomotives to be employed were tried last winter in the Derbyshire hills, and were found quite equal to the task of scaling and descending the most rapid slopes of Mont Cenis. The French government desires to see the experiment made on its own territory, and upon the very spot where it is to be practically applied; it has accordingly authorised the construction of a few kilometres of rail between Lanslebourg and the summit of the Cenis, in the steepest and most difficult part of the whole line. This strip of rail is expected to be completed in February next, at latest, when trains will be run by way of trial. That time of the year is usually the very worst for the mountain, so that success then will be success for ever.

The English capitalists and engineers who have undertaken this mountain railway are perfectly easy as to the result. The contractors promise to convey, at all times of the year, a train of from a hundred to a hundred and fifty passengers, with their baggage, and the post-office bags, in four and a half hours, from Susa

to St. Michel. They are to build tunnels or covered galleries in places where danger of avalanches renders it necessary. The difference made to travellers will be immense. Both in coming and going, the mountain would be crossed by broad daylight, instead of in the dark, as is now the case, and tourists would enjoy the scenery at present completely lost to them. Once fairly over the Cenis, the ambitious rail will in future laugh at mountain impediments; and it is expected that the example will be extensively followed for the passage both of Alps and Apennines, the more so as the cost of these mountain lines is said very slightly to exceed that of railways in the plain.

TALL PEOPLE.

THE same Professor Quetelet who weighed all the people of whom he could get hold, to ascertain against how many pounds *avoirdu poids* they could turn the scale,* has also measured them with a foot rule, or metre standard, to see what was their altitude, or longitude. He adopted the same plan in the one case as in the other. He obtained permission to carry his weights and measures to certain foundling hospitals, where there is always more than a plentiful supply of children; to barracks, where young men of the healthy ages are congregated; to asylums, in which there are examples of the weak and the aged, counterbalancing the evidence furnished by the young and healthy; to universities and schools, where young fellows and hobble-de-boys rule the market; and to factories, in which sedentary labour somewhat stunts the growth. These he compared with groups of individuals living in various places, and occupied in a great diversity of employments, with a view to a fair and candid deduction as to the average height of full-grown persons. Giants and dwarfs he cared nothing about, nor prodigies of any other kind.

Beginning with those very important personages, the babies, M. Quetelet remarks, that, "before Buffon, no inquiries had been made to determine the rate of human growth, successively from birth to maturity; and even this celebrated naturalist cites only a single particular example; neither has he examined the modifying influences which age exerts on height." M. Quetelet gives all the heights in metres and decimals; but as we in England have not yet got rid so completely of our insular singularity as to imitate continental nations in this particular, it may be well to translate his measures into English feet and inches, at the rate of (about) three feet three inches and a half to the metre. Well, then, children a day old are found to be about nineteen inches long, some a little more, and some a little less. The Foundling Hospital at Paris agrees with that at Brussels in this average.

* See No. 191, page 352: Fat People.

Of course the extremes vary. Of five hundred day-old infants at Paris the lengths varied from seventeen to twenty-two inches; but very few of them deviated far from nineteen. What relation the gallant Generals and Commodores of the dwarf family bear to these numbers, we need not stop to inquire. The boy-babies—nature's nobles in the bud—are usually about half an inch longer than the girls. At five years old, according to rather an elaborate tabulation by M. Quetelet, the average height of French and Belgian boys and girls is three feet three inches; at ten years old, four feet two; at fifteen years old, five feet; and at twenty years old, when the difference of height in the two sexes is greater than at any earlier age, five feet six inches for young men, and five feet two inches for young women. Girls are nearer to their full height at sixteen than boys; in other words, a maiden is *relatively* as tall at sixteen as a youth is at eighteen, the sex and full growth of each being taken into account. As regards country and town life, M. Villermé has ascertained, contrary to the generally received notion, that the inhabitants of towns are, on an average, a little taller than those of country districts. M. Quetelet found the same rule to apply in Brabant; where, after nearly ten thousand measurements, he ascertained that town people are, on an average, three-quarters of an inch taller than country folk. Much discussion has taken place in connexion with the question at what age we cease to grow. M. Quetelet shows that, in Belgium at any rate, men not only grow between twenty and twenty-five years of age, but even on to thirty. Among nine hundred soldiers and recruits whom he measured, this was perceptibly the case, although the increase was, of course, but small. Dr. Knox, of Edinburgh, some time ago observed a similar fact; young men, leaving the university at twenty or twenty-two years of age, and returning seven or eight years afterwards, had increased, not only in breadth but in height. The average height of conscripts, twenty years old, taken from the whole of France, for renewing the imperial armies, is found to be five feet three inches and a half. Were it not that the French are very accurate in these matters, one might almost doubt whether the average was so low. Only one French soldier in forty, is above five feet eight high; many of them barely reach five feet. It is the opinion of army surgeons that the maintenance of large standing armies tends to lessen the average height of the population of a country, by various direct and indirect agencies. Mr. Cowell, one of the factory inspectors, some years ago measured as well as weighed many of the factory operatives at various ages; but as Lancashire mill-folk are very prone to wooden shoes of formidable thickness, and as it is not stated whether Mr. Cowell included or excluded these substantial understandings, it may be well to pass over his tabulations unnoticed. Young men in a good station of life are rather taller than those who

have more privations to bear. Of eighty Cambridge students, between eighteen and twenty-three years of age, the average height was over five feet nine. It appears to be pretty certain, from the average of a large number of instances, that the height remains constant only from about the age of thirty to that of fifty; a slight average growth until the former limit, a slight average diminution after the latter. Among all the adults of all classes measured by M. Quetelet, he found that fully developed and well-formed men varied from four feet ten to six feet two, with an average of five feet six; and that fully developed and well-formed women varied from four feet seven to five feet eight, with an average of about five feet two. Professor J. D. Forbes, of Edinburgh, about thirty years ago, measured about eight hundred young fellows at Edinburgh University; those at twenty-five were a little, and only a little, taller than those at twenty, and presented an average of five feet nine and a half: Irishmen being a little taller at that age than Scotchmen, and Scotchmen a little taller than Englishmen. But these had their shoes and boots on, and were nearly all from the well-to-do classes. And, moreover, as the professor remarks, little men don't like to come forward to be measured.

All things considered—shoes taken off, various classes selected, and all ages from twenty to sixty—the average of well-formed Englishmen cannot be far removed from five feet seven, about an inch taller than average Belgians, and rather more in excess of average Frenchmen.

Learned people say that tall people owe their tallness to a great variety of circumstances. M. Villermé remarks, that "human height becomes greater, and the growth takes place more rapidly, other circumstances being equal, in proportion as the country is richer, the comfort more general, houses and clothes and nourishment better, labour and fatigue and privation during infancy and youth less; or, in other words, the circumstances accompanying misery postpone the period of the complete development of the body, and stint human nature." M. Virey, in the *Dictionnaire des Sciences Médicales*, points to the fact that intense cold and dry heat tend alike to dwarf the population: a moist temperate climate being better than either. The Lapps, Samoiedes, Ostiacks, Koriacks, Kamtchadales, and Esquimaux, are all diminutive. The Poles, Livonians, Danes, Prussians, and English, are a little taller than Austrians, Frenchmen, Italians, and Spaniards, owing (as he thinks) to living in more temperate climates. Livy and Pliny used to say that the Germans and Gauls were taller than the Greeks and Romans. Some philosophers think that, as the equatorial regions of the earth revolve in their daily course with greater velocity than the polar, and as the centrifugal force is thereby greater, it may be that *this* is the reason, or one reason, why tropical mountains and tropical trees are taller than mountains and trees elsewhere; and they ask, are tropical men and

women taller from the same cause? When we know more of Central Africa and Central Brazil than we now know, perhaps an answer may be obtainable to that question. As to the gigantic Patagonians, who appear in our old Voyages and Travels as mighty men, eight, nine, and even ten feet high, they have settled down into stalwart fellows about six feet high; Patagonia is so far down towards the Antarctic regions as to puzzle our theorists a little. M. Virey tells us that, during the American War of Independence, the Arkansas Indians were regarded as the noblest-looking men in North America; a cargo of hats was sent out to them from Paris, but the hats were much too small to fit the heads. By universal testimony, little people are found to be more sharp, smart, and dapper than tall people. M. Virey says: "Tall men are generally much more weak and slow than short men, for all exertions both of body and mind. If men of high stature are preferred, for their fine appearance, in the body-guard of princes, and in the service of eminent persons, they are certainly neither the most robust nor the most active; but they are docile, candid, and naive, little prone to conspire for evil, and faithful even to the worst master. In war, they are more fitted for defence than attack; whereas an impetuous and brusque action suits better for short and vivacious men. Tall men are mostly tame and insipid; like watery vegetables; inasmuch that we seldom hear of a very tall man becoming a very great man. Little men manifest a character more firm and decided than those lofty and soft-bodied people, whom we can lead more easily both morally and physically." Let all little men rejoice at such an opinion as this, and especially at the following incident: An empress of Germany, in the seventeenth century, to gratify a whim, caused all the giants and dwarfs in the empire to be brought to court. As it was feared that the giants would terrify the dwarfs, means were taken to keep the peace; but instead of this, the dwarfs teased, insulted, and robbed the giants to such an extent, that the lengthy fellows complained, with tears in their eyes; and sentinels had to be posted to protect the giants from the dwarfs.

Biblical and mythical and classical histories tell us much about tall people which we cannot well understand at the present day. Og, King of Bashan, whose bed was fifteen feet long; the Rephaims, Emims, and Enacians, who were reputed nations of giants; Goliath, the mighty warrior, eleven feet high; the Emperor Maximinus, nine feet high; Gaius the Roman, nine feet nine inches high; the monster Scotchman, eleven feet high, living under King Eugene the Second (whoever he may have been); the exhumed coffin, eleven feet long, containing mortal remains, which crumbled into dust on being exposed to the air—all these are noticed by Le Cat, together with other people fifteen, twenty, or even thirty feet high. Peace be to them! Sir Hans Sloane and Baron Cuvier proved that the bones of many so-called giants were really the bones of quadrupeds. Who can tell us any-

thing about the great bed at Ware? Who slept in it? Did he tuck himself in? Did his toes come down to the bed-foot? There was another celebrated bed the length of which we should like to know; Procrustes used to rack out the short men, and chop off the tall men, until they were exactly long enough to fit it.

Concerning such individuals as have had their altitude honestly recorded in actual feet and inches, for the admiration of posterity, we need say nothing about them unless they overtop six feet. We all of us meet occasionally with strapping fellows, Life Guardsmen and others, who exceed this limit by two or three inches. The Queen's army, it appears, possesses one soldier who belongs to the family of giants. What is known respecting him has been thus told recently in the *Edinburgh Courant*: "Corporal Moffat, of the Scots Fusilier Guards, at present staying at Kelso, on the recruiting staff, is believed to be the tallest soldier in the army. His height is six feet seven inches and a half, and he is proportionably stout. Corporal Moffat joined the Scots Fusiliers about two years and a half ago, is about twenty-four years of age, and is a native of Leitholm, near Kelso. Previous to joining the Fusiliers, he worked on the Duke of Roxburgh's estate, as a forester, for a considerable time. Growing tired of that occupation, he offered to join the Life Guards, but was rejected owing to his immense height and weight. Nothing daunted at this, Moffat determined, if possible, to join the Scots Fusiliers, and proceeded immediately to London for that purpose, and was quickly accepted. As Corporal Moffat is well known in the Kelso district, he will doubtless be of great assistance to the recruiting party stationed there." Corporal Moffat, may your shadow never be less! Many of the giants at the fairs range between six feet and a half and seven feet in height. Poor fellows! it used to be (perhaps still is) a part of the bargain between them and the showmen, that the latter should be allowed to sell the bodies of the giants to the surgeons after death. As to the seven feet men and upwards, the Long Lawyer, as he used to be called about thirty years ago, was unquestionably a member of this group. Cornelius Webb, in his *Glances at Life in City and Suburbs*, says of him: "He once affected to ride a cob; but it was soon perceived that he was walking, and that the little fellow was only trotting along between his legs—as it were, under his auspices. Sitting some time after dinner, one day, he remarked, on a sudden, that he would 'get up and stretch himself'; if you had seen the consternation, or if I could describe it! He would pertinaciously persist in travelling by one coach, when he ought to have gone in three; and as he was resolutely bent on riding inside, they made a hole through the roof for his head and shoulders, and got informed against for carrying luggage higher than the number of inches allowed by act of parliament. His tailor, when he measured him, like a sensible man, stood on a flight of steps; but three of his journeymen,

unused to such a perpendicular position, are said to have broken their necks. He never laughed till the laughing was over with all the rest of the audience; a joke took some time to travel from his ear to his midriff and tickle it to laughter. When he went to the pit of the theatre, the gods of the one shilling gallery cried out, 'Sit down, you Sir, in the two!' not perceiving, short-sighted creatures as they are, that he was many feet lower down than the midmost heaven." Joking apart, the Long Lawyer, a London solicitor, was really over seven feet in height. There died at York, in seventeen hundred and sixty-five, two persons who were twins in birth and nearly twins in height; for the brother was seven feet three inches, and the sister seven feet two; and yet these tall people were only seventeen years old. About the same time, there died one Mr. Bamford, a hatter in Shire-lane: he was famed far and wide for overlooking all his neighbours by a head and shoulders or so; but we have mislaid his feet and inches. The Annual Register requires us to believe that Ames M'Donald, who died near Cork, about the middle of the last century, was a hundred and seventeen years old, and seven feet six inches in height, when he died; but this is a poser, for giants rarely live to be old men. That Edmund Malone was seven feet six inches in height, we can more readily believe, for he was a young fellow in his prime. Dr. Musgrave, who noticed him in the Philosophical Transactions, states that his (middle?) finger was six inches and three-quarters long, his span fourteen inches, his cubit (the distance from the elbow to the finger-tips) twenty-six inches, and his arm thirty-eight inches long. Some of the writers of the last century tell of a Swede, Daniel Cajanus, who was seven feet eight inches in height. Of the same stature was Cornelius M'Grath, concerning whom a strange story was told by Watkinson, in his Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland. Speaking of the celebrated Dr. Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne, Watkinson says: "The bishop had a strange fancy to know whether it was not in the power of art to increase the human stature. An unhappy orphan appeared to him a fit subject for trial. He made his essay according to his preconceived theory, whatever it might be; and the consequence was, that he (the orphan M'Grath) became seven feet high in his sixteenth year." But another and a more probable story is, that M'Grath was of ordinary stature till fifteen years of age; that he then shot up with amazing rapidity; that the good bishop kindly took him into his house while suffering from "growing pains;" that M'Grath then commenced a career of exhibiting as a giant; and that he died in England towards the close of the reign of George the Second. His full height was seven feet eight; and his hand, we are told, was "as large as a shoulder of mutton." Fortunately for the truth of this last statement, shoulders of mutton are not all of the same weight. In the year seventeen hundred and eighty, there was an "Irish youth" exhibiting at Charing-

cross, seven feet ten inches in height. Gaspard Bauhin speaks of a Swiss who was eight feet high; and Vander Linden of a Frisian of the same height. A skeleton eight feet long was dug up, in a Roman camp near St. Albans, in the last century; and Cheseldon, the celebrated anatomist, estimated that the living man must have been eight feet four inches in height. A giant, eight feet high, was exhibited at Rouen in seventeen hundred and thirty-five. Just before the close of the last century, Mr. Jenkins, a bank clerk, died; he was, by permission of the directors, buried in the ground within the building (not Soane's structure), formerly the churchyard of St. Christopher. This was done because he had a horror of being dissected, and because it was known that surgeons were trying quietly—not to catch him alive, but to catch him dead. There is some doubt about his height, but his outer coffin was eight feet long.

As for "O'Brien, the Irish giant," there is no identifying him with exactness. He was multiple. There was one of that name in the last century, who made so much noise, and gained so much money, that other giants afterwards took the name of O'Brien, and dubbed themselves Irish, as a good speculation. This is believed to be the true explanation of the fact that there have been Irish Giant O'Briens seven feet ten, eight feet two, eight feet four, and eight feet seven inches high. The skeletons of two of these mighty men are preserved in the Hunterian Museum, and that of a third in the Dublin Museum, while the remains of a fourth are interred in a Roman Catholic burial-ground at Bristol. One of the profitable O'Briens, whose real name was Patrick Cotter, "at Bath, on a cold night, terrified a watchman by quietly reaching up to a street lamp, and taking off the cover to light his pipe." He made a fortune by exhibiting himself, and had a carriage so constructed as to accommodate his very elongated person. One of this voluntary group of O'Briens, we do not know which, was exhibited in the Haymarket, and was announced in the handbill as "A lineal descendant of the old puissant King Brien Borcau, and has in person and appearance all the similitude of that great and grand potentate," of whom, of course, we ought to have cartes-de-visite somewhere or other. Moreover, "it is remarkable of this family that, however various the revolutions in fortune and alliance, the lineal descendants thereof have been favoured by Providence with the original size and stature which have been so peculiar to that family." Happy O'Briens! The Charles Byrne, "Irish Giant," who boasted of his eight feet three inches about eighty years ago, was possibly one of the O'Brien group, with the name slightly altered; he died through drinking, and had, like many persons of abnormal growth, a great horror of being dissected after death. A Swedish guardsman, in the service of Frederick the First of Prussia, was eight feet six inches high; which was also the height of a man noticed by Diemerbræck, and the length of the skeleton of a woman described by Uffenbach.

Vanderbrœck tells of a negro of Congo who was nine feet high; and Martin del Rio says that he saw a Piedmontese at Rouen, in fifteen hundred and seventy-two, who was nine feet high.

Beyond nine feet we decline to go. Higher numbers are rather suspicious, and cannot be relied upon. If tall people be half as tall again as ordinary people, which would make them about eight feet and a half in their stockings, this is surely a temple lofty enough for any well-constituted mind to dwell on.

A NAME.

SUCH a lovable face!
Over which not a trace
Of her thoughts as they rise need be missed;
Eyes, whence kindness beams out,
And lips, when they pout,
Seem to meet you half way to be kissed:

Smiles so radiant, that down
(She never could frown)
Her whole form they appear to expand;
Grace and tact so combined
In her touch, that though blind,
You would feel 'twas her fairy-like hand.

Her voice is so ringing,
So melodious, that singing
Is discord compared with her words;
When she laughs 'tis elation,
And you feel a sensation
Of sunshine and music and birds.

Her name! O when sad
If I think it, I'm glad;
But when spoken, or written in rhyme, a
Strong word flies in haste
At her sponsors' bad taste,
For why did they call her JEMIMA?

HOW WE "FLOATED" THE BANK.

"Give me a look in, if you are passing my way," wrote Mr. Hardy* one day to me, "for I think I have the very thing that would suit you."

Mr. Hardy was a most prosperous "Promoter" of companies, in the days—little more than a year ago—when the getting up of joint-stock concerns was by far the most lucrative business in the City, and I was a poor place hunter—a man trying to obtain a situation with a salary, that I could count upon as a monthly or quarterly certainty, even if the amount was small. Therefore, on the receipt of this note, I lost no time in proceeding to that gentleman's office, where I at once sent in my name to the great man himself. Unlike my first interview with this "Promoter of Companies," I was not kept waiting more than five minutes, and was then ushered into his private sanctum.

"I am glad you are come," said he, "for there is a new Joint-Stock Bank coming out, and although I have not much, if anything, to do with it myself, I have helped the promoters

a little, and can give you a line to the solicitors of the concern. If you can bring them a director or two, and play your cards well, it is very probable that you may get the secretaryship, which has not yet been given away." Saying this—writing and talking at the same time—Mr. Hardy sat down and scrawled a few lines of introduction to a legal firm near Lincoln's Inn, and gave me the note, accompanied with the following verbal advice: "When you see these and other gentlemen—any one, in short—connected with this or any other company, be bumptious, talk big, as if you could bring Rothschild, Baring, and Peabody as directors upon any company that you are connected with; do this, and you will prosper. Good-by. I shall be glad to hear how you get on." In another moment Mr. Hardy was, according to his old custom, rushing down stairs and across the street, holding a bundle of papers in his hand, one of which, I believe, was, as of old, a crossed cheque.

If I had not delayed in reparing to Mr. Hardy's office, how much quicker did I hasten to that of the solicitors in Lincoln's Inn! Where, on sending in Mr. Hardy's note and my own card, I at once obtained an interview with an elderly gentlemanly individual, clad in a new and shining suit of black, white twice-round-the-throat neckcloth, and high stand-up shirt-collar. Our conversation was short and to the point. Mr. May, the solicitor, knew me by name. "Was I not the nephew of Mr. Dant?" "Yes." "Would Mr. Dant join the board of the bank which Mr. May was projecting, provided I obtained the secretaryship?" I could not reply for certain, but I would ask my relative. "Could I give an answer to-morrow?" I believed I could. I would see my uncle and ask him. "Very well; if Mr. Dant joined the board, I should have the secretaryship of the bank: that was to be a bargain."

But what *was* the bank? Its magnificent title was:

THE GRAND FINANCIAL AND CREDIT
BANK OF EUROPE, ASIA, AFRICA, AME-
RICA, AND AUSTRALIA (LIMITED).

Capital,

ONE MILLION STERLING,

divided into one hundred thousand shares of one hundred pounds each, but that it was only contemplated to issue twenty-five thousand at present, and that not more than twenty-five pounds would be called up on each share; that one pound per share was to be paid on application for shares, and three pounds per share on allotment—in short, the usual formula with which all readers of the advertisements in newspapers have been made so well acquainted during the past eighteen months. After these announcements upon the prospectus, came the word "DIRECTORS," in very large letters, but of directors there was no list whatever—not one single name following the heading. The reason for this—so Mr. May told me, but whether I believed him is another

* See "Promoters of Companies," p. 110, vol. xi. of *All the Year Round*.

question—was that they had “so many first-class men, sir, offering to join them, that their great difficulty was in making the proper selection.” Below the word “DIRECTORS” came “MANAGER,” followed by “SECRETARY,” “SOLICITOR,” “AUDITORS,” “BANKERS,” and “BROKERS;” but to none of these was there any name affixed. It was very like a playbill in which the names of the pieces and the characters were put down, but to which the names of the actors had not yet been added. The piece was not yet cast. As a matter of course, the prospectus set forth that the future business of the proposed bank would be exceedingly large and highly profitable. That it was intended to have branches and agencies in Paris, New York, Madrid, Berlin, Melbourne, and Bombay. That already arrangements had been made to purchase the business of Messrs. Saloman and Company, of such a street; and that some thousands of the shares had already been applied for by the public. The latter assertion I knew, by a kind of instinct, was not true. However, my business was to get a good director or two for the company, and by this means to secure a berth for myself; and therefore, armed with half a dozen copies of the prospectus, I rushed out of Mr. May’s office, called the first Hansom I saw, and was quickly bowling away towards the West-end, where my uncle resided.

He was an old gentleman who had amassed a fair competency in China. All his sons were provided for and well started in the world, his daughters were married, and he, a widower, found that with between seven hundred and eight hundred a year, he could live very comfortably in lodgings, enjoying the conversation of his old friends at the Oriental Club, and his rubber of whist in the evening. He said he had had enough of business, that he had no faith in these new banks or finance companies, and that the small sum he should get every week for his attendance at the board-room, would be no inducement to him to undertake the trouble, worry, annoyance, and responsibility of being a director.

At last, upon my pressing him very much, and showing him what an excellent chance it would be for me to obtain a permanent situation, he not only consented to his name being put down, but promised to do his utmost to bring with him, as another director, an old friend—a retired Indian officer—with whom he was engaged to dine that evening at the Club of Anglo-Asiatics in Hanover-square.

Of course, this was excellent news for me, and our dinner at the Oriental was a double success. Not only did my uncle’s friend consent to join the board of the new concern, but he, too, brought a friend with him. The following morning I therefore arrived at Lincoln’s Inn-fields, and presented Mr. May with the written consent of three gentlemen who agreed to become directors, and thus a respectable nucleus of the board was formed.

But although three directors—more particularly when bearing respectable names—are some-

thing, they are not enough to form a direction. My part of the work was, however, done. Mr. May, who was the promoter—and was to be the solicitor—of the company, at once gave me an undertaking by which the secretaryship of the bank was secured to me, provided the company proceeded to allot the shares. In promoter’s slang, if the company floated, I was to have the berth I desired.

My three friends served admirably to draw other directors. Armed with them, our promoter was soon on his way to visit other parties in the City: persons whom he either hoped would join, or who could induce others to join, the direction.

At one of these interviews I happened to be present, and it was amusing, nay—for a future secretary not a little instructive—to observe how—promoter like—our future solicitor managed, without exactly telling a decided untruth, to suppress the truth most effectually. “Is your board really formed?” asked the gentleman. “Oh dear yes,” the promoter replied; “we have got Mr. Dant, formerly of the house of Maclean, Dant, and Company, in Hong-Kong; also General Fance, late of the Madras Army; also Mr. Westuan, who was in the Indian Civil Service; besides several others;” the “several others” being purely imaginary. I knew quite well that Mr. May had secured no other directors, and he knew that I knew he was stating what was not true; nevertheless, he repeated it again and again to different persons, until he really seemed to believe his own falsehood.

At last, after about a month’s hard work, and rushing about in Hansom cabs, we got together the names of eight gentlemen who consented to become directors of The Grand Financial and Credit Bank of Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia (Limited). *How* we managed this, it would take many pages of this periodical to tell in detail. Some of them joined us because the prospect of two, or perhaps three, guineas on every board-day—the board sits once a week in all Joint-Stock Banks—was an object of some moment to them. Others—like my own respected uncle—joined us on the understanding that they were to have this or that situation in the bank for some relative, connexion, or friend. Many were—indirectly—paid for joining us; that is to say, the promoter, Mr. May, would say to some acquaintance, “I will give you two hundred pounds if you procure me Mr. So-and-So as a director.” Perhaps the acquaintance had never seen Mr. So-and-So in his life, but he had an acquaintance who could manage to get introduced to another person who knew the gentleman. He managed, by paying the individual he knew, a ten pound note, to get introduced to the “other person,” and, by giving him three or four “fivers,” to obtain the desired introduction, which, when once accomplished, he offered, perhaps, a hundred pounds to the gentleman, provided he would join the direction of the new bank. None of these were ready-money transactions—such bargains never are. All payment of promotion money—all money paid, or to be paid,

directly or indirectly for directors, or for working out the scheme of "floating" a joint-stock company—is made contingent upon the shares being allotted to the public. If the concern does not proceed so far, all payments are considered "off." The usual—I might almost say the universal—way with promoters is to give an undertaking, of which the following may be regarded as an average specimen:

104, Little Green-street, London, E.C.,
14th October, 1864.

Dear Sir,—As promoter of "The Grand Financial and Credit Bank of Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia (Limited)," I hereby undertake to pay you the sum of two hundred pounds sterling (say 200*l.*), should you succeed in obtaining the consent of Mr. So-and-So, of such a place, to become a director of the said bank. The money to be paid within seven days of the shares being allotted to the public, and on condition that the said Mr. So-and-So gives his written consent that his name may appear upon the prospectus of the company, and remain there for at least six months after the company shall be brought before the public.

I am, dear sir, yours truly,
N. MAY,
Solicitor and Promoter of the
above Company.

To Nicholas Sharpe, Esq.,
25, Grove-street, E.C.

Having obtained this undertaking, the first thing Nicholas Sharpe, Esq., does is to get it stamped at Somerset House, for which he pays the small sum of sixpence. He then proceeds to take his measures to catch his director, which he accomplishes by means like those I have pointed out, being generally a series of introductions which remind one of the House that Jack built. Of the two hundred pounds, not more than perhaps a fourth remains to him when all his expenses are paid. He has generally to give about one-fourth to the various worthies from whom he obtains the introductions, and has seldom less than half to give to the gentleman whom he brings in as a director. By the uninitiated it will be asked where all the money promised to be paid to directors, comes from? The reply is, it all comes out of that great nugget called the "promotion money," which is dug out of the pockets of the shareholders, so soon as the deposit money paid on application for shares flows into the treasury. In the "Articles of Association"—to which, be it remembered, all shareholders bind themselves in their application for shares—there is a clause inserted, which, in the case of our bank, was as follows:

In consideration of the trouble and expense to which Mr. May, the promoter of this company, has been put to, it is hereby agreed that he be paid the sum of five thousand pounds sterling as promotion money, within seven days of the company proceeding to allot their shares to the public.

It does not follow that the amount of promotion money is always the same. I have known it to be as high as ten thousand pounds, and as low as three thousand, according to the nature of the undertaking and the amount of

the proposed capital. But, although he retains by far the greater share of the cake, he is obliged, in order to obtain the wherewith to set his machine in motion, to part with some large slices of it.

Such slices induce many directors to join the new concern. These good things form part of what in promoters' language is called "the pull you get out of the concern." But there are other "pulls" which the directors, who join a company when it first starts, generally obtain, and among these not the least is that of being "qualified," gratis, to sit at the board. In every joint-stock concern, the directors are obliged, by the "Articles of Association," to hold a certain number of shares—generally forty or fifty—in the company, but gentlemen who join in order to get "a pull" out of the affair would be the last to lay out money in paying for shares. The result is, that the promoter of the company almost always offers to qualify directors—that is, to give them the requisite number of shares—gratis. It was so with The Grand Financial and Credit Bank of Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia (Limited). Mr. May, our promoter, soon saw that to induce certain gentlemen to join the board, he must offer to qualify them, which he did: thus making them, as it were, a present of four hundred pounds each, in shares, for on each share they received it was stipulated that the calls to the amount of ten pounds should be written off as being paid, and thus they had only to wait until the first two calls were paid, when they could, if they wished, retire from the direction, sell their shares, and pocket four hundred pounds each.

With these various advantages, or "pulls"—viz. a certain amount of patronage in the bank, the two or three guineas for each director per week, a few slices of the promotion money, and being each "qualified" with forty shares on which ten pounds per share was paid—it is not to be wondered at that, in a very few weeks, we found our list of directors full, and very little wanting to launch the company on the sea of public opinion, there to float or sink, as fate might direct. Our prospectus was now filled; the parts of the play were cast. Under the word "DIRECTORS" came the list of those gentlemen—a list now swelled up to eight—and so pleased was Mr. May with the general appearance of these names, that he never seemed tired of contemplating the paper, of which I must give a copy as it stood when the bank was ready to be floated. Here it is:

THE GRAND FINANCIAL AND CREDIT BANK OF
EUROPE, ASIA, AFRICA, AMERICA, AND AUSTRALIA
(LIMITED).

Incorporated under the Companies Act, 1862.

CAPITAL, ONE MILLION.

With power to increase to 5,000,000*l.*

Twenty Thousand Shares of 50*l.* each; First Issue,
Ten Thousand Shares.

The Directors do not propose to call up more than
25*l.* per Share.

Chief Office in London.

With Branches in every important commercial
town in the world.

DIRECTORS.

G. F. Dant, Esq., Oriental Club (late of Messrs. MacLean, Dant, and Co., Hong-Kong and London).

Major-General Fance, The Grove, Buxton (late Military Secretary Madras Government).

Charles Westman, Esq., 108, Westbourne-square (late Madras Civil Service).

William Everett, Esq. (Director Liverpool Eastern Insurance Company).

C. T. Francatello, Esq. (Messrs. Francatello and Co., Minch-lane).

H. B. May, Esq., 75, Great Tooting-street.

Edward Spencer, Esq. (Director of the Mutual Trading Company, and of the Overland to Siberia Company).

Colonel T. Frost, 212, East Grove-terrace, Belgravia.

Mr. Everett lived two hundred and more miles from London, and although a man of business himself, never intended to sit at the board, for the reason that in all probability he would never be in the metropolis more than once in six months, and then only for a few hours at a time; Mr. Francatello was a Levantine commission agent, without fifty pounds of capital that he could call his own; Mr. H. B. May was a lad of nineteen (a brother of Mr. May, who was the promoter and solicitor of the company), and was put on the board partly to keep a little more of a "good thing" in the family, partly to vote as his brother directed; Mr. Spencer was a gentleman, whose only trade or calling was to become a director of anything that was offered him, for the sake of the two guineas a week it yielded him in fees; and lastly, Colonel Frost was an individual whose antecedents were best known to the officials of the Bankruptcy Court, and whose only property was a yearly increasing crop of debts. If the public at large had known all this, perhaps it might not have applied for many shares in our concern. But it was not for us to tell of our short-comings. We had gone through no small amount of trouble to do as well as we had—let others look to the inquiries that had to be made—each man for himself.

But now, on the very verge of success, there arose a difficulty which at first seemed insurmountable: nothing less than that old old story the want of money. Our directors—such as they were—were all in their places. A respectable bank had—goodness and the promoter knew how—consented to take our account; the names of Mr. May, as solicitor, of myself as secretary, of an accountant as auditor, were all in their places; in short, the curtain had but to be pulled up for the play to begin, when it was discovered that there were no funds forthcoming for the advertising expenses. Before the public can pay for shares, they must apply for them; before they can apply for them, they must know that the company has started; and the only recognised means of informing them is by advertising. But advertising is expensive. To make the British public fully aware that The Grand Financial and Credit was ready to take their money in exchange for share certificates, it was

necessary to insert a very long advertisement in the Times, and other papers. To advertise a prospectus of ordinary length for ten days or a fortnight, a sum of not less than from eight hundred to a thousand pounds is requisite, and this sum was not forthcoming. The directors individually did not see why one of their number any more than another should put his hand in his pocket. The bank might not float after all. And be it remembered that, up to this time, nothing but promises and undertakings had passed from one to another; money or cheques had not been as much as seen.

In this dilemma a meeting of the directors was called, at the temporary offices which Mr. May had borrowed gratis from a friend for a few weeks, giving the said friend an undertaking that, if the bank floated, he should be paid his rent fourfold.

The meeting of the board was a full one, but no one seemed inclined to put down any money. Even the promoter and future solicitor, Mr. May, "could not see" his way clearly to drawing a cheque, on the chance of being repaid if the shares of the company were allotted. He said he was quite certain that the scheme would take with the public, and he tried to persuade the directors collectively to give some advertising agent a guarantee that the expenses of advertising would be repaid, but they—one and all—did not seem to see it in the light in which this gentleman saw it. "If he was so certain that the scheme would pay, why did he not advance the money himself? Or, if he were short of funds, he might give the advertising agent the guarantee required." The meeting broke up without coming to any determination whatever, and I felt that my future secretaryship was by no means secure.

But Mr. May was not a man to be daunted by trifles. In the course of twenty-four hours he had overcome the difficulty. By means known only to himself, he procured somewhere in the City, an advertising agent, with whom he made the following bargain. This agent was to take upon himself the whole risk of advertising The Grand Financial and Credit Bank, and was to expend such sums as the promoter directed for that purpose, up to eight hundred pounds. For this, if the company did not proceed to allotment, he was to receive nothing; but if it succeeded—if the applications for shares were sufficient to warrant an allotment taking place—he was to be the first person paid out of the deposits, and for every hundred pounds risked he was to receive three hundred. The bargain, in short, was a speculation, in which the advertising agent might lose all the money he had laid out, or might, in less than a month, make a profit of three hundred per cent. All parties appeared well pleased with the bargain. The directors were so, because whatever happened they would not lose anything. Mr. May was pleased for the same reason. The advertising agent was glad to risk the money on the chance of being repaid threefold.

Accordingly, our prospectus appeared one morning at full length in all the papers, as did also a notice in the money article of the leading journals, telling the public that "A new scheme, called the Grand Financial and Credit Bank of Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia, had been brought out with a nominal capital of one million," and that "the direction was highly respectable."

Were the applications for shares numerous? At first they were not, but a day or two after our prospectus was launched, friends of Mr. May's were sent upon the Stock Exchange to "rig the market." Thus, some gentleman not worth a ten-pound note in the world, would obtain an introduction to a respectable stockbroker, and would tell him (in confidence, of course) that he wanted to sell a hundred shares in the "Grand Financial," but would not do so at less than two, or two and a half, premium, because he was sure of having a certain number allotted him, and he knew well that the number applied for already, exceeded the number to be allotted in the proportion of three to one. In the mean time, another friend would go to another stockbroker, and say that he wanted to buy so many shares of the new bank, and would go as high as two, or two and a half, premium for them. Thus bargains—mere shams, of course—were made at this price, were quoted in the "money articles" (though not in the authorised lists), the public read them, were anxious to make money, thought that even if they got but a few shares it would be money easily made, and so came forward with a rush to apply for shares. In ten days, all our ten thousand shares were applied for, and before another week was over that number was nearly doubled. The directors wisely struck while the iron was hot, and proceeded at once to allot the shares. Mr. May got a cheque for his five thousand pounds of promotion money; the different directors got their respective "pulls" out of the concern; the advertising agent made his three hundred per cent profit; and so the bank floated.

How the affair worked—how it went on very well at first, then got shaky, and, finally, came to most unmitigated grief—may form the subject of a future paper.

FOR LIFE OR DEATH.

"SEÑOR INGLESE, a young lady renders a visit to your grace," said fat Juan the waiter, throwing the door wide for the visitor's admission. I was sitting in the window of my little room on the third floor of the Fonda de l'Alameda, looking down upon the darkling promenade where the lighted cigar-tips were beginning to twinkle among the fountains and marble statues, and where the beaux and belles of Malaga, with fan and rustling mantilla, and jingling spurs, were passing and repassing in endless groups, full of mirth and gossip. As for myself, I was heartily tired. We had had

a long day's work in getting the cargo on board, and I was fairly worn out with the toil of encouraging the lazy stevedores and disputing with the harpies of the Spanish custom-house. But the good ship Tudor, of Bristol, to which I belonged, in the capacity of first mate, had to be freighted as speedily as possible for the homeward voyage, and, as Captain Meiklejohn was getting frail and old, most of the responsibility devolved upon myself. Nor did I grudge it, the rather that Price and Thompson, our owners, had as good as promised that when the Tudor next sailed away out of sight of the tower of St. Mary Redcliffe, Henry West should command her, vice Meiklejohn, retired on a pension. And then—

But as my thoughts were busy with the day-dreams which fancy had conjured up with reference to what I should be able to do with the increased salary and higher position of captain, day-dreams in which the sweet little face and soft brown eyes of Alice Croft were inextricably mixed up with visions of a snug English home at Clifton, with happy children at play in its garden, and a loving welcome back for the husband and father when he should return from sea, Juan the waiter flung the door open exactly as I have described. And Alice Croft herself, with her poor little pretty face very white and tear-stained, came hastily in, while in the passage without I caught a glimpse of the wrinkled ugliness of old Scraphina, the old crone who was the Crofts' only servant.

"Alice, darling! You here? What is the matter?" said I, springing from my chair; and in a moment the poor little lonely English girl was weeping on my shoulder. It was not for some moments that I could succeed in calming her agitation sufficiently to draw from her a coherent account of the misfortune that had occurred, though I easily guessed that no trifling cause would have induced a girl so modest and strictly brought up as my dear Alice to enter the crowded and bustling Spanish hotel for the purpose of visiting a bachelor inmate of the Fonda. But at first Alice could say no more, through her sobs, than the words, "My father, my dear father!" and these led me vaguely to conclude that some accident had happened to old Mr. Croft, though of what nature I could not guess.

Old Mr. Croft was one of the few English, excepting the invalids whom the warm winter climate had at that time begun to attract, resident in Malaga. He was a widower, and Alice was his only child, and about nineteen years of age. Her father had married late in life, and on this account, perhaps, and for the sake of the wife, to whom he had been tenderly attached, and who had died when Alice was still very young, he was unusually wrapped up in his daughter, of whom he was excessively proud and fond. He was, indeed, of rather a proud and reserved nature, and disposed at times to speak and think with bitterness of a world by which he considered himself to have been unjustly used. His past history I never thoroughly

knew, for he was not over communicative, but he had been very well educated, and I often fancied from his manners and appearance that he had once occupied a much higher social position than that which he filled when I knew him. As it was, he was poor, and lived by the exercise of his talents as an artist. I believe he had considerable merits as a painter, but from constitutional shyness, or some feeling of, perhaps, morbid sensitiveness, he did not carry his powers to the best market. He was an excellent draughtsman, and had a fertile fancy and a correct taste, and he got his living partly as a drawing-master, partly by executing designs for Perez Brothers, the richest manufacturers in Malaga.

The Tudor paid periodical visits to the port of Malaga, and during one of these I had accidentally formed the acquaintance of Mr. Croft, for whom I willingly undertook to execute some trifling commission in England. I suppose we were mutually pleased with each other, for I perceived at once that he was a very superior man, and that in spite of the cynical tone that he sometimes affected, he was really of a generous and kindly disposition, a little warped by the world's rough usage. On his part, he showed his regard for me by inviting me to his house, a compliment which he paid to but few of our wandering countrymen. I saw Alice, and soon learned to love her, and after a while I was overjoyed to find that her innocent heart was given to me. But old Mr. Croft, who had been accustomed to think of his daughter as a child, set his face against our marriage, and behaved, as I thought, very cruelly in the matter. It would have been a hard thing for him, I am sure, to part with Alice to any one, a not uncommon case of half-unconscious parental selfishness. But, to do him justice, I am sure he thought that he was merely showing a prudent forethought for his child's interests in forbidding her to marry. He not unreasonably objected that my profession was hazardous, and my income small, and that though youth was apt to be sanguine, experience must be cautious. There was no hurry. Alice was very young, and I was young too, for that matter. Probably we should both of us see cause to change our minds, but if not, some years hence, &c. &c.

Though I chafed against the sentence, and Alice grieved at her father's decision, the was a good, obedient girl, and submitted to her parent's will. She would never marry any one else, she said, but she would not marry me in spite of her father's prohibition, never, never, though her heart should break for the loss of me. And with this qualified engagement and troth-plight I was forced to be content, though I looked eagerly forward to promotion, hoping that as captain of the Tudor I might appear to the old artist as a more eligible son-in-law. And now here was Alice suddenly appearing in my room at the hotel, and sobbing piteously as she tried to tell me what had happened.

At last I learned the truth: Mr. Croft had the

habit of taking a morning walk outside the landward gate of the city, and in the direction of the mountains. He was an early riser, and had an artist's fondness for the face of nature when the earth seems to awaken, fresh and young, at the first kiss of the sunshine. He was used, then, to stroll out beyond the walls as soon as the gates were opened for the ingress of the peasants coming to the market, and many of his best sketches were made in these rambles. In one of these strolls, that very morning, Mr. Croft had by ill luck stumbled into an ambush of the banditti, from whom the wild sierras neighbouring on Malaga are seldom free. These robbers, under a noted chief named Moreno, had of late been very audacious and troublesome, and it was conjectured that a party of the gang, lying in wait for the chance of kidnapping some wealthy townsman or landed proprietor, had pounced on Mr. Croft for lack of loftier game.

It is probable that the bandits may at first have been deceived as to the value of their captive. An Englishman is always considered a wealthy man in virtue of his nationality, and, besides, the sight of broadcloth produces on Spaniards nearly the same talismanic effect that the Neapolitan lazzaroni experience when confronted by a "vestito di panno," whose rank is inferred from the material of his coat. But at any rate they had made a hasty retreat to their fastness in the hills, bearing their captive with them. And when Alice, after waiting for her father's return, first in surprise, then in uneasiness, and lastly in alarm, went out to seek him, and came home baffled and tired, deep in the afternoon—old Seraphina gave her a letter, hastily pencilled on a scrap of folded paper, which an unknown peasant woman had left at the house.

The letter was from Mr. Croft. It ran thus:

"My dearest, dear Alice,—To give you pain is worse than pain to me, but the truth must be told. I am a prisoner in the hands of Moreno, at a place high up in the sierra. I write this at a halting-place, and I am told we shall instantly resume our journey, whither I do not know. I am in the hands of desperate men, who sell blood, or shed it, for money. They demand a ransom from me. As I have succeeded in convincing them that I am poor, they have fixed my price at five thousand reals. But unless this money is paid by noon on Wednesday, the chief assures me that—but why torture you, my child, by repeating a barbarian's threats?—at any rate, you will no longer have a father. I must die, Alice, dear, for well I know that to raise even that small sum is impossible. And we have no friends in Malaga. Perez Brothers might perhaps be induced to—but no. My employers would refuse. It is possible, however, that the British consul might take up the case. At any rate, Alice, love, I am sure he will assist you in getting home to England, and it is my earnest wish that you should leave Spain as soon as you can, and seek out those relatives of your mother

whose names you have heard me mention, and who will not deny you shelter and protection in your great need. The robbers whose prisoner I am bid me say that on Wednesday, at noon, some of the gang will await the payment of my ransom at the oratory near the village of Santa Maria del Gloria, at the foot of the mountains that border the road to Antequera and Madrid. There the money can be paid in the presence of the village padre, who is known to the band, and Moreno has sworn on the crucifix to give me up unharmed, and not to molest the messenger. But I have little hope, though I know you will try to obtain the money, dearest child. Farewell, dear Alice, God bless you, and Harry West too. I feel I was harsh with respect to—but you have my consent now. Bless——”

Here the paper had been torn, probably by the rough hands of the messenger to whom it was entrusted, and some lines of writing were lost. However, the signature, “Philip Croft,” still remained legible, and beside it was a rude representation of a cross, traced apparently with the point of a charred stick, while below it was written the word “Moreno,” in Mr. Croft’s handwriting. No doubt the robber captain had chosen to add his countersign to the document, the language of which he was unable to interpret.

“How shall we save him!” were the words that broke from the lips of both. I had to learn, however, that Alice had not sought me in the first instance. As soon as she received the pencilled lines, and had rallied from the effects of the first stunning shock, she had been nerved to exertion by the thought of her dear father’s danger, and she had gone from place to place, accompanied by old Seraphina. But in vain. The most obvious course to pursue, since there were but a very few dollars in Alice’s slender purse, was to sell the modest furniture of the little household, but a short interview with a broker proved the uselessness of this step. Those humble Lares and Penates would not bring a fourth of the necessary sum, and the landlord, too, had claims for the rent of the current half year. The artist’s forebodings with respect to the liberality of Perez Brothers were fully realised. Alice begged and prayed, but the firm refused, blandly but pitilessly, to make any advance, much less one of five thousand reals. Mr. Croft, they said, was a very good draughtsman, but business was business, and there was no obligation on either side. They very politely bowed the weeping girl out of their counting-house. At the British Consulate, Alice met with no better success. By ill luck the consul was absent. He would return in three or four days, but for the moment there was no help to be looked for in that quarter. Alice had a few cherished ornaments that had belonged to her mother. These she had sold, but, alas! they had produced but eight or nine hundred reals. And though old Seraphina, who took all the saints to witness that her master was a good man, and her young mistress an angel, heretics

or not, came with tears running down her wrinkled face, and offered her contribution in the shape of the gold cross she wore on holidays, and some twenty pillar-dollars saved out of her wages, nearly four thousand reals remained to be provided for within a brief delay.

What was to be done? I had not ten pounds in my possession, and neither I nor the Crofts had any credit with the bankers or merchants of Malaga. Captain Meiklejohn, as I knew, had but cash enough in his cabin locker to pay his harbour dues and the ship’s provisions, and even if the cautious old Aberdonian would have lent me the sum required, as I believe he would, it was out of his power, since his wife, as I knew, drew his salary while he was away at sea. Only one hope I had, and that was that the merchants to whom our cargo was consigned might lend me the money on my note of hand, backed by the captain’s recommendation. Alice, the good old Spanish woman, and I, lost no time, late as it was, in hurrying to the residence of the gentlemen of whom I have spoken. They were a well-known firm, Edwards and Son, and had had many dealings with my employers at Bristol.

“Mr. Edwards is absent, señor; he went yesterday by the steamer to Barcelona,” said the servant who opened the door.

“Mr. James Edwards?” asked I, as my heart sank.

The man arched his eyebrows. He wondered, he said, that I was not aware that Mr. James had been away from Malaga this week past. He was amusing himself, shooting and coursing, at a friend’s country-house somewhere near Xeres de la Frontera. He was expected back for the grand bull-fight to-morrow. Mr. James had too much good taste to miss such a spectacle as that, Pedro was sure.

I turned away, feeling the bitterness of hope deferred. Still, there *was* hope. Mr. James Edwards was a very good-natured young man, not so often to be found in the counting-house as his steady and punctual father, but he had always been civil to me in our business transactions. If he should really be back in time for the bull-fight, which I now remembered was to take place on the following day, he might be persuaded to lend the needful sum. At any rate, no more could be done on that night. It was getting late. The lamps fixed beneath the effigies of saints, and the few street lights, were already shining yellow through the darkness, and from *tertiaria* gardens and the windows of wine-shops came the tinkling sound of guitars and castanets, with that of voices singing or brawling, and the clink of glasses and stamping of feet. It was time for Alice to go home and take some rest—rest that would be needed to recruit her strength for the toil of to-morrow. I walked beside her through the dark streets, but we did not converse much. Each of us was discouraged and full of sad forebodings, and when I had said “Good night” with forced cheerfulness, and gone upon my way, the recollection of Alice Croft’s pale face and wistful

look haunted me. I did not at once return to my hotel, but paced the Alameda for hours, racking my brains to no purpose. And at length, when the last lounge had dropped away from the deserted promenade, and there was nothing to be heard but the rustling of the night wind through the leaves and the melancholy splashing of the fountains, I, too, went home, and, thanks to the habit of a sailor's life, slept soundly enough.

On the next morning I was early abroad. While the women were gathering with their pitchers around the fountains at the corner of the streets, and the drowsy waiters, half asleep as yet, were letting down the gaudy awnings in front of the cafés, I sallied forth from the Hôtel de l'Alameda, unable to remain inactive, but with no clearly defined purpose. It was in vain that I tried hard to be hopeful and sanguine, and that I repeated to myself, for the twentieth time, that all would come right, on the return of Mr. James Edwards. But the young merchant might not return; he might refuse my request; any of the many petty accidents that daily occur might prevent him from granting me the favour I sought. And that a life was at stake I could not doubt. This was Tuesday. To-morrow the ransom must be forthcoming, or Alice would be left an orphan. It was in vain that I endeavoured to persuade myself that the robber captain was merely practising on the fears of his prisoner, the better to extort money. I knew but too well that Moreno was a man of his word in such matters. Ugly stories, half forgotten, which I had heard in the city or on the quays, recurred vividly to my memory now, and in many of these Moreno's name figured. Nothing was to be hoped from the bandit's clemency.

To seek the assistance of the authorities might have seemed a natural step. But this was not to be thought of. If I complained to the corregidor, it was probable that that dreaded functionary would see in the rendezvous at the village oratory an opportunity of attempting the capture of the obnoxious Moreno, and would think more of entrapping the outlaws than of saving the life of an obscure English heretic. And any affray between the police and the robbers would only ensure the butchery of the helpless captive, while it was notoriously impossible to hunt down offenders in such a difficult district as that of the mountains above Malaga.

Meanwhile the preparations for the great bull-fight went gaily on, and as I passed the amphitheatre I heard the hammers of the workmen engaged in putting up the striped canopies that were to shelter the more aristocratic spectators from the rays of the hot sun. The savage spectacle of the day was to be an unusually grand one for Malaga, by no means the Spanish city where this favourite Spanish sport is exhibited on the largest scale. But on this occasion the Captain-General of Andalusia, with some foreign guests of high rank, were to honour the show with their company, and the town had gone to considerable expense in providing for their entertainment.

As early as I decently could, I called at the merchant's house, but Mr. James Edwards had, of course, not yet arrived. I had not expected him to be there so early, but my impatience would not let me rest, and I paced the town like a perturbed spirit, eyeing with indifference the motley groups of people in holiday attire who were already astir and chatting merrily over the anticipated amusements of the festival. Duty made no call on my time, for, for that day, the work of freighting the ship was suspended. Our porters and dock labourers would not have been tempted to miss the bull-fight, even by quadruple wages.

At ten o'clock I went to the Crofts' house, and saw Alice. Poor girl, the dark circles around her pretty brown eyes, dimmed by weeping, showed that her sorrows had made the night a wakeful one for her. She was feverish and agitated, at one time seeming to partake the hopes that I expressed in the kindness of Mr. Edwards, at another, wretched and cast down, dreading the worst. In case of failure, her poor little plan was formed. She would go up, with such a small sum as she could get together, perhaps one thousand reals, to the chapel at the foot of the hills, and would try with prayers and tears to soften the ruffians who held her father prisoner. She would beg them to let him live, to restore him to her, and would promise by degrees to pay the remainder of the ransom, if she went into service to earn the money. And she really in her innocent ignorance appeared to believe in her own power to melt so hard a heart as that of Moreno, who was said to have the blood of sixteen victims on his own hand, and who was at war with the law.

I did not openly oppose this scheme, conscious that it would be well that Alice should have something on which her mind could dwell, as a relief from torturing thoughts. But I determined that she should not incur so fruitless a risk by going thus—a lamb among wolves—if I had to detain her by force. My own heart was very heavy when I left the dear girl, making her promise to stay quietly at home and await my return, and sallied out once more into the streets of the town, now alive with merry crowds hurrying to secure good places at the show. I began to perceive how slight was the foundation on which my hopes rested, and to fear, too, that the death of her father would darken my darling's happy young life, and that she would lose the sunny freshness of her youthful mind in the pain of that sharp and bitter trial. And the unthinking mirth of the careless pleasure-seekers chafed and galled me, as the sight of merriment is apt to do in the hour of suffering.

Noon at last. I went again to the house of Mr. Edwards. Good news, as I thought, awaited me. The young merchant, with two of his friends, had arrived, and, after partaking of breakfast, had repaired to the amphitheatre, "like all the world," as the old hag of a portress, left in charge of the house while all the other servants were gone to the show, rather

grudgingly remarked. To the bull-ring I therefore hastened at once, and having purchased a ticket which was to admit me to any part of the amphitheatre, elbowed my way through the swarming crowd, and entered. I had no eyes for the mass of gay-coloured apparel or the rows of eager excited faces, tier above tier, and still less for what was going on in the ring, where a young bull was being goaded to fury by sharp tridents and fluttering flags, a mere prologue to the more thrilling scenes that were to follow. But the crowd baffled me. Such multitudes from the neighbouring towns and villages, attracted by the spectacle, had poured into Malaga, that it was only for the ladies, and a favoured few of the magistracy and nobles, that seats could be retained. The rest stood so thickly massed together that I soon found that to trace out Mr. Edwards was hopeless. Giving up the effort in despair, I turned to depart, but through some mistake, instead of gaining the open air, I struck into a long passage leading I knew not whither, though I heard the bellowing of the bulls from the dens where they were shut up. Suddenly, from a sort of crypt, the half-open door of which was on my right, came the sound of voices, and I caught these words in Spanish: "If you offer a large reward? Say four thousand reals! Consider, gentlemen, four thousand reals for an hour's work!"

My feet seemed rooted to the ground, and I felt my face flush while I listened, as if life depended on my overhearing what followed.

"We shall not find a man, bid what we may," said another voice, despondently; "no one not tired of his life would run the risk, and, Caramba! what will the people say? There will be a riot, and our houses may pay for it. Only think what will be the fury of the thousands up yonder when they hear that Manuel Zagal cannot perform at all, and that we have no matador to take his place."

"If the idiot had but had the sense to break his leg after the bull-fight instead of before!" said a third speaker, in a whining and querulous tone. "But, señores, what is to be done? I would sooner pay four, ay, or six thousand reals out of my own pocket, than be the one to tell the people that they are to be disappointed of the cream of the sport. They may sack our houses in revenge, and mischief will surely be done. What can we do? Not a matador worth a straw within leagues, and Choco only fit to face the young bulls, and those with the wood on their horns. We shall have to use the demilune, and before the captain-general, what a disgrace!"

I began now to understand more clearly the purport of this discourse. I knew that a celebrated matador named Manuel Zagal had been engaged to come over from Seville, the headquarters of bull-fighting, to exhibit his skill in despatching the infuriated animals that had been previously provoked to fury by their mounted tormentors the picadors. This man, who was famous for skill and courage, stood so high in his profession that it had not been thought

needful to hire any other artist in the same line, and as matadors, like opera singers, travel from place to place as their engagements serve, there was no member of the guild then in Malaga. There was, indeed, an active toreador whose nickname of Choco was well known, but this man, though a favourite with the mob, was more a buffoon than a swordsman, and had neither the dexterity nor the daring which a true matador should possess. When a matador is wounded, or some untoward accident prevents the appearance of one, there is no resource but to end the lives of the bulls by cutting off their legs or hamstringing them by means of a sharp scythe on the end of a pole, called a demilune. But this barbarous expedient seldom fails to irritate the populace, who are displeased, not at the cruelty of the act, but at the absence of that risk of human life that is essential to the excitements of the bull-ring.

In this case, I could easily divine what had happened. The talented performer from Seville, Señor Manuel Zagal, had met with a serious accident, and the authorities were afraid to announce to the people what had happened, aware that a violent outbreak of popular wrath would ensue. As for the speakers, by moving forward a step I could see them. Two were in civil uniform, the alcalde of the city, and a heavy beetle-browed man, the corregidor of the police. The third was a supple, deferential personage in black, well dressed in the French style. He was the manager of the shows.

"His excellency has arrived. I hear the trumpets!" said the head of the police, gruffly; "we must go and meet him, or we shall be thought lacking in respect. Pity there is no time to find a substitute; but who, even for four thousand reals, would face our two best bulls—the black Portuguese and the brindled Murcian, fiercer than——"

"Make the reward five thousand reals, and I am your man, noble señores," said I, with sudden resolution, emerging from my hiding-place. Had I risen, like a theatrical spectre, through a trap-door, my appearance could not have created greater consternation. The corregidor was the first to recover his equanimity. He knit his heavy brows into a dark frown, and angrily demanded who I might be.

"Henry West, British subject, mate of the ship *Tudor*, now in port," was my answer; "ready to be your matador to-day, if you will raise the pay to five thousand reals."

An animated discussion then took place. The idea of a sailor, an Englishman, undertaking the difficult and perilous task of bull-killing—for the matador, as is well known, is the only person exposed to real danger—seemed absurd. But then, it was shrewdly observed by Don Ramon, the alcalde, if I chose to get gored to death it was no concern of theirs, and the catastrophe would at least put the people in good humour. But the worthy magistrate was reluctant to give so much as five thousand reals. If I would accept three thousand, or even four?

But I was firm. Five thousand or nothing

were my terms, and as the mob began to get very noisy and impatient, the bargain was struck. An agreement was hastily written and signed by the alcalde, and a cheque for the money was drawn and entrusted to the master of the shows, to be handed to me when I should have earned it. As I traced my signature on the paper I felt that I was bartering my own life and blood to save Alice's father. That five thousand reals would be his ransom. But I had little time to meditate, for I was hurried off to another room, and there bidden to assume, as quickly as possible, the gay costume of a matador, and in the mean time the magistrates hastened to their places, and the master of the shows went on the somewhat awkward errand of explaining to the multitude that Manuel Zagal had broken his leg, and that a tyro would take his duties on himself.

From the dark little chamber in which I was occupied, clumsily enough, in exchanging my own clothes for the gaudy Andalusian suit which was a necessary adjunct of the character I had assumed, I could now and then catch the sound of the manager's voice, as in oily accents he addressed the enlightened audience of his patrons. At first his speech elicited much noisy disapprobation, but presently laughter and cheers drowned the oration, and when he came back he wiped his forehead with an air of self-congratulation. The audience had been restored to good humour. They had been testy and irritable, the manager told me, as he lent me his practised aid in dressing, until he reminded them that, at the worst, they had never seen an Englishman killed, and might look out for a novel excitement. "I told them, St. Martin forgive me, that you were the first torcador in all London, and had come to Spain to challenge our best bull-fighters to a contest of skill," continued the man, and then bade me look at myself in the glass. I did so, but hardly recognised myself, so much was my appearance altered by the embroidered jacket, the slashed calzoncillos, the many-coloured silken sash, the scarf heavy with silken fringe, and all the lace, bell-buttons, and frippery of my costume. The master of the shows eyed me critically, from the broad-leaved sombrero with its red plume and golden cord, down to the pumps and silk stockings which are as essential to a matador as to a master of the ceremonies, and clapped me on the shoulder with a good-natured word or two of approval. Then he presented me with the scarlet cloak and the long straight-bladed sword, and rapidly explained to me what strokes were considered "foul," and what were in accordance with the etiquette of this gory pastime. He was by no means ill-natured, and did his best to encourage me, offering me wine and refreshments, and insisting that I should swallow at least one goblet of strong Calceavella.

"Cheer up, comrade," said he; "keep cool, avoid the first rush, and you may get off with unbroken bones and a whole skin. Throw the cloak well over his horns, and drive in the sword thus, turning the wrist in this manner, and

avoiding the breastbone. Never be in a hurry, or you are lost. I have seen old hands lose their heads at the first roar and dash of a hurt bull, but I like you, lad, schismatic as you are, and I don't want to see you go out feet foremost. Let me feel your pulse." And he took my wrist between his fingers, probably to ascertain if I were too much flurried by the approach of danger to attend to his instructions. However, he released my hand, muttering with something of genuine admiration in his tone, "Those island mastiffs! a tough breed!"

He then conducted me to a nook whence I could see through a small window which commanded a good view of the arena and of the spectators above, while the close trellis-work of rusty iron prevented the occupant of the lair from being visible. And then, bidding me be of good courage, he left me to attend to his duties. I was alone, though I could hear the hoarse bellowing of the bulls confined in dens near me; and now for the first time I had leisure to realise the rashness of my undertaking. I had followed the bidding of impulse in what I had done, and now, as I looked around, and remembered that the thousands of spectators would gloat over my dying agonies as greedily as over those of the brute victims of their cruel sport, I realised the full danger of my position. But I quieted my apprehensions by the thought of Alice. It was for her dear sake, to earn her father's ransom, that I was crouching where I was, in this mummer's garb, waiting till I should be called forth, like a gladiator of the old pagan days, to redder the sand of the bull-ring with my blood. For of escape from serious injury I had little hope. I knew that very few even of the agile Spaniards, accustomed from childhood to every detail of these repulsive spectacles, were willing to accept the perils of the matador's trade. I had seen bull-fights before, at Seville, at Vigo, and elsewhere, and remembered well how formidable were the huge animals bred in the lonely pastures of Murcia and Castile, expressly for the arena. But I drove away these thoughts, and took a deliberate survey of the amphitheatre.

I looked up at the endless tiers of spectators, the ladies, with their flashing eyes and waving fans, some in the old Spanish dress, but most in Parisian finery; at the dandies of Malaga; the crowds of shopkeepers and artisans; whole families together, from the delighted old grandmother to the child in arms, that was being taught to clap its little hands and crow at the sight of bloodshed; at the multitude of peasants in holiday attire such as their ancestors wore in the days of Ferdinand and Isabella. I gave a glance to the place where the captain-general, in his rich uniform blazing with decorations, sat amid a brilliant group of officers and ladies, whose diamonds and courtly splendour seemed oddly placed in such a scene. And then I looked down at the ring.

As yet the sports had been merely of an introductory character. Three or four young bulls had been worried with tridents and flags. A

"craven," as those pacific animals are called whose temper is known to be meek, had been tormented with squibs, barbed darts, and the incessant brandishing of red scarfs before his eyes, and had finally been despatched by Choco, who did what may be called the comic business of the theatre. And now a fine bull, with wide-spreading horns, was in possession of the ring. This animal, however, disappointed the amateurs of the arena by showing more desire to escape than ferocity. He ran round and round, seeking an outlet, and bellowing piteously, as the active toreadors on foot, with banners and scarfs, ran nimbly around him, taunting and teasing him, until his hide was like a pincushion stuck full of tiny barbed darts adorned with coloured paper. Of this, too, the people grew weary, and a general shout arose:

"Toros! toros! the Murcian bull at once! No, the Portuguese! Let the English matador show us what stuff he is made of. Toros!"

The manager looked up appealingly to the captain-general, and, receiving an august nod of permission, bustled out. Very soon there was a flourish of trumpets, and then a deep roar, and then, amid clapping of hands and buzzing of countless voices, the brindled Murcian bull came at a heavy canter into the ring, stopped short, lifted his head, and gave a second roar of impatient anger. A noble beast he was, and the populace enthusiastically shouted forth their comments on his tossing mane, his deep chest, his dauntless look, the strength of his limbs, and the sharpness of his horns. Then, to the sound of martial music, in poured the mounted picadors, two and two, fluttering with bright ribands, and dressed in the old Castilian garb. They lowered their lances before the captain-general, and rode three times round the arena to exhibit their bright scarfs and rich jackets, while the cymbals clashed and the drums rolled out their loudest notes. The bull pawed the ground, distended his nostrils, and, with a short bellowing cry, stooped his head and began the attack. The words "Bravo, toro!" rent the very sky.

It was a butcherly business at best, though I admit that the rich dresses, the long lances, and waving of scarf, and riband, and plume, gave a false glitter and gallantry to what was really a very dastardly and disgusting scene. The picadors, padded as they were, and furnished with immense boots through which the bull's horns could not pierce, while scores of watchful attendants stood ready to distract the animal's attention in case of need, or to carry off a prostrate combatant, were safe enough. But the bull, itself bleeding from the repeated lance-thrusts, did great execution among the horses, plunging his sharp horns into their quivering flanks again and again, and inflicting ghastly wounds, while still the wretched steeds went reeling round the ring, until loss of blood made them drop down dying on the ensanguined sand. And still the music played its most stirring strains, and still the people shouted, while the ladies waved fans and handkerchiefs in token of

applause, and all the gory savagery of the Spanish national sport went on with sickening repetition. At last, nine horses being dead or frightfully injured, two picadors having been bruised by falling against the caken barriers, and the bull being much spent, the remaining horsemen left the ring. Ropes and hooks were fixed to the carcasses of the slain horses, and they were dragged away, and fresh sand and sawdust were thrown down. It was time for the matador to appear.

"Now, Englishman, they are waiting for you. Remember the thrust, and be cool," whispered the manager. He led me into the ring, and I made my bow to the captain-general, and another to the audience, while the manager, with much grandiloquence, presented me to the public as "Don Enriquez, of London, the distinguished volunteer, who had so kindly undertaken to fill the office of the eminent Manuel Zagal." Scarcely had he finished this speech before the bull began to advance, and my introducer hastily retired. I stood alone in the ring, my heart beating thickly, and a red film seeming to obscure my dazzled eyes, while the clamour of the crowd, and the consciousness that I was the mark on which thousands were gazing in pitiless expectation, almost unnerved me. I had faced danger before, but not in such a shape, and I am not ashamed to own that for a moment my knees felt strangely weak, and my pulses fluttered like a bird over which the hawk hovers. Then came back the thought of Alice, and I was myself once more. Disregarding the spectators, I bent my whole attention on the bull, which was slowly approaching me, with its head bent down, and bloody foam dropping from its lips. I steadied myself on my feet, carrying the cloak gathered up on my left arm, and with my right I kept the sword pointed to the earth, ready to spring aside when my antagonist should charge. But the bull was more hurt than I had expected. His movements were slow and painful, and the blood trickled fast from his brindled flanks. His rolling eyes fixed upon me, then he gave a roar, and dashed at me, while, following the manager's instructions, I avoided him by springing aside. I thought the animal would have wheeled to renew the attack, but the last rush had manifestly exhausted his remaining strength. He fell on his knees, and did not rise till the men on foot beset him with squibs and darts, when pain and fury revived his forces, and he again made a floundering charge. This time I stepped aside, and, without throwing the cloak over the bull's horns, plunged the sword into his neck. He fell, and the audience set up a shout of "Well done, Ingles!"

"That was an easy victory," whispered my friend, the manager, as he led me off, after making my bow to the people; "but don't let it make you rash. The poor brute was bleeding to death; anybody could see that! It will be different with the black Portuguese."

And so it proved, for the audience loudly demanded that the lances of the picadors should

he tipped with wood, all save a point two inches long, so that the next bull should show better sport. And, not to dwell on details, after five or six horses had been disabled, the picadors retired, and amid a flourish of trumpets I was placed face to face with the black Portuguese bull.

"Bravo, toro! look what a wicked eye he has! I bet an ounce of gold on the bull!" shouted one amateur, springing to his feet, and there was a burst of laughter at the offer of this wager, but a breathless silence succeeded as I advanced, step by step, towards where the bull stood, pawing up the loose sand with his fore feet, and roaring low, as he watched me. He was a superb beast, very large, but a model of symmetry, and his sable coat, spotted now with froth and gore, was as glossy as satin. He was very little hurt; his bloodshot eyes rolled fiercely; he was evidently gathering breath to renew the battle. On my part, I was well aware that my life hung by a thread, but that if I could conquer this one bull, the last survivor, my work would be done, and the money—the price of a man's safety—would be earned. A hasty word of prayer rose from my heart to my lips, and I advanced, cautiously but firmly. The bull appeared to be in no hurry. He waited, with heaving flanks, close to one of the barriers, while I drew near.

"Have a care, Englishman, have a care! he means mischief!" cried some well-meaning spectator in the front row. Scarcely were the words uttered, before with a deep and sudden roar the black bull came thundering down upon me in headlong charge. It was all that I could do to spring aside, and the bull, unable to check himself, dashed his head against the wooden barriers with a violence that made many women in the lower tier scream with affright. But with great quickness the huge beast recovered himself, and came rushing towards me, with his head low. Again I sprang aside, but so narrow was my escape that one of the sharp horns caught the sleeve of my gaudy jacket, and ripped it open from wrist to elbow, while the applause of the audience followed the stroke. Before I could use my sword, the bull nimbly wheeled, and I was forced to trust for my life to my superior speed of foot, running round the ring, hotly chased by the bull, whose feet sank in the loose sand. I then turned, and made an ineffectual effort to throw the red cloak over the eyes of my terrible antagonist, but the crafty beast eluded me, and this time, as I sprang out of its way, I felt a sharp pang in my left arm and side, and staggered back, almost dropping the sword. The people set up a cry:

"Toro! Viva El Negro! the black bull for ever! Well done, bull! I see the Englishman's blood."

A crimson mist floated before my eyes, I grew dizzy, and the roar of the audience confused me. Was all indeed lost? Half mechanically, while the blood ebbed from my wounded arm, I looked around me. The bull was close by. I saw his

glaring eyes and tossing horns; he lowered his head, and made a fresh charge. Hardly knowing what I did, I thrust forward the long strong-bladed sword of the matador, and planted my feet firmly, and then there was a crash and a bellowing roar, and I was beaten to the ground, and rose again, feebly, and then I was leaning on my sword, reeling like a drunken man, as the manager supported me and bade me bow to the audience, while the shout of "O, well done the Englishman! Viva! Viva! Well done!" rose from thousands of throats. Close beside me lay the carcase of the black Portuguese bull. My sword had reached its heart. The next thing I remember was that I lay, half swooning, on a mattress in one of the inner crypts of the amphitheatre, while a doctor was binding up my hurts.

"Considerable hæmorrhage, but no artery damaged, after all!" said the French surgeon; "let us see the other wound. Bah! a mere graze. You have escaped *belet bien*, my young friend, after all!"

So it proved. I suffered no inconvenience beyond loss of blood from the injury I had received, and the money I had earned being forwarded by a safe hand to the place of rendezvous on the following day, Mr. Croft was set at liberty. Moreno proved a man of his word, being equally willing to release a captive whose ransom was paid, as to poniard an insolvent prisoner. I will not attempt to describe Alice's joy at being reunited to the father whom she had mourned as dead, nor the mingled terror and gratitude with which the darling girl learned the desperate means I had taken to save him. I am captain of the Tudor now, and she is my wife, and in our English home, in which we have lived happily together for so long, she has often recalled, with tears and smiles, that episode in our lives which was so nearly proving tragical at Malaga.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER XIV. TO EUSTON-SQUARE.

FERMOR had been watching restlessly from afar off. Someway he was troubled and disturbed in his mind on the subject of Miss Manuel. He had an uneasy sensitiveness about being overlooked by her, and to his ears had drifted a whisper of the coming "little supper." Westley Kerr—"a trading wit," a "mere professional ladies' man" (these were the disparaging associations in his mind)—had passed with a sort of exulting patronage. "They want me at the Manuel house to-night. One of the old little suppers, you know—thought *you* were an intimate there."

He strode across to her. "She cannot mean," he thought, "to mark me in this fashion."

"Good night," said Miss Manuel to him. "I am going a little earlier. I have a few choice friends to-night. *You*, unhappily, are disqualified. I have rules which I can't break through."

He bit his lips and almost "bridled" with mortification.

"No, no," she said, suddenly altering her tone. "Look over there! I am getting fond of *her*. I want you to be domestic—to be a proper model family man—a chronicler of the beer. You understand. Seriously I do. You have all the virtues for home life, and I want you to cultivate them. You will shine in that department, whereas in our poor company of fools and triflers you would be lost. So I tell you, candidly, I am not going to ask you."

There was a surprising mixture of contempt, badinage, and haughtiness, in the way she spoke these words. Fermor was altogether overpowered, and could hardly reply.

"O, as you please," he said; "you have, of course, the right to do so."

"Of course I have," she said, laughing. "Now go, and let me see you in a conjugal light. It will be a treat. I must gather my little flock together, now. Where's Mr. Romaine?"

Mr. Romaine had just left Mrs. Fermor, having brought her up from Lord Puttenham's slender restoratives. She had been very earnest, and prettily earnest, in her work of conversion, and was quite elated with her progress.

For that whole evening almost she had purposely "kept Mr. Romaine to herself," and he had not even spoken to the blonde bride. She had indeed aided him in his brave struggle. Fermor came up to her chafing and disgusted. "We must come away," he said, somewhat roughly. "We have had quite enough of this place. I am sure you can't want to stay longer."

This tone jarred on Mrs. Fermor in her present missionary excitement. She was beginning to be deeply hurt by her husband's late neglect. She could not help answering,

"*You* have not helped to make it agreeable to me." (This was in the carriage going home.)

"I suppose," he answered, "you will now go straight to your father, and bring me to judgment before him. We always had tell-tales at school."

This was the key-note—how the rest of the air was played may be conceived.

They entered their house in silence. She went up-stairs without a word; he was turning into his study for a moody and hopeless meditation, almost raging against that cold heartless woman, whom he had now finally done with, when a page came to the door and handed him a note. It ran:

"Can you forgive me? I have been worried the whole night, and took it into my head to *try* you. You came out of it angelically. It is all my own helplessness, and I suppose I do not know how to treat you. Of course you would not come *now*. I have no right to expect it: and yet—there *is* a place at the round table."

"P. M."

Hesitating, pleased, angry, fretful, elated, doubtful, Fermor at last went forth slowly, got into a cab, and drove away to Alfred-place.

Mrs. Wrigley had sat and suffered through Lord Puttenham's musical party. Major Carter had been at her feet, figuratively, the whole night. He had talked to her of his finer friends, and the finer houses where he was intimate. All her life—which had been strongly impregnated with the City—she had panted and thirsted after the choice hunting-grounds of society. She listened with curiosity and an oily glance of tenderness. The major was rapidly drawing near to the golden gates of proposal, when he would knock and show his papers, and beg that he might be allowed to pass.

He had just gone to see for the heavy old-fashioned chariot, and was coming back with news of it (he had stopped outside the door to have speech with some friend), when he heard those Welsh names which had contorted his face so terribly. For a moment he had forgotten the old swinging chariot, and the lady who swung in it; but the smooth look had come back to his face again, and he was presently carefully and kindly guiding Mrs. Wrigley down stairs. At the chariot door she said—there was a coquettishness in this interview at the chariot door—"You will come to-morrow, Major Carter, at the usual hour. We shall expect you. I shall be not at home for 'those men.'" (Alas! for poor Hoblush and Punsher Hill!)

But the major's face was overcast. He answered in trouble: "I am so sorry, so grieved; but pressing business calls me away to the country to-morrow."

Anxious lines came upon his face as he spoke, and he looked round restlessly and absently. Mrs. Wrigley, languished, said he must be sure and not stay away long; and coquettishly pulled the glass of the old chariot between her and the major, as she thought she had already risked scandal.

Major Carter walked away to Hans-place. He found his son up—a quiet unquestioning and dutiful youth, of whom he often complained that he had to find brains for him, and thought, and a sort of earthly providence. He accepted his father in every situation without so much as a doubt, which was an advantage. He was a handsome youth, too.

The impatience and contortion that was on the major's face in the room of the fashionably smooth smirk he had taken out with him, struck young Carter; but he asked no questions.

"Where's that old Bradshaw," said the major, roughly, "that was knocking about here? Now, when it is wanted, it can't be got."

The son found it, and brought it. As the father's face was bent over the lamp to read, the light played upon worn furrows and gullies, and strange twists of sour impatience.

"It will do," he said, "for a wonder. Where's that hand-bag?"

He began to thrust a few things into it, talking as he did. "I have to go away for a couple of days. Don't mention to any one that I am out of the house. Now mind! Not a word! Good God how I am persecuted! I shall just catch a heavy train. Good-by."

Major Carter hurried out of the house, carrying his hand-bag, and shut the door softly behind him. He got into a cab. He passed Lord Puttenham's house, where the lights were still in the windows, where the link-boys were still shouting hoarsely, and where the hall-door, opening now and again, showed a patch of brilliancy.

By that time Mrs. Wrigley was at her dressing-glass, being unscrewed and ungirted, and approaching more nearly the normal figure of general Seal-dom. Softly amorous of her ad-

mirer, she was receiving the hired homage of her maid.

At Euston-square, Major Carter asked for a ticket for Bangor, and got ready for a dreary and miserable night.

CHAPTER XV. MISS MANUEL'S "LITTLE SUPPER."

HARDING HANAPER, M.P., her Majesty's Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Westley Kerr, Doctor Jay, F.R.S., and Mrs. Jay, Colonel Langton, C.B., Gr. Gds., and Webster—some-way always spoken of without the homage of "Mr.," or the familiarity of a christian name, a dry saturnine satirist, rather inclined to be silent—these formed the fringe of Miss Manuel's little supper-table. The company were in spirits, and came inclined to be gay. The fire was blazing, the table was lighted with pink wax in white china candlesticks. Everything was delicate and inviting.

Webster settled his napkin about his loins with anticipatory satisfaction. "I think Puttenham gives the best parties in London," he said. "There are none I like so well."

Harding Hanaper, fair and simpering, and considered to be a young official of great promise, knew there was something masked under this speech. "Come," he said, "explain."

"They fit the mind for enjoyment," said Webster, appraising the dishes. "It is like being in jail for a year, or being on a reginen, and *then* eating what you like, or on a desert island, or in a spiritual retreat, or—He takes good care to leave no knives and forks in the way. What a narrow soul the man has!"

This was like the curée at Fontainebleau. The huntsman had given the signal, and the hounds all fell, full cry, upon the Puttenham stag.

"The prostration that comes on me in that place," said Harding Hanaper, bathing his hand in his long hair, "the languor, the loathing of life—"

"And of office!" said Webster.

"And his fiddlers! Where does he get those horrible beings? If, indeed, it was anticipating a place of final punishment—or it was a pantomime and demons were wanted—"

Miss Manuel's supper consisted of delicate game and other dainties. Champagne lay cooling in the centre, like an Indian belle on an ottoman enjoying the punkah.

Now Fermor entered with a sort of shyness, for he found a ring of faces that were strange to him. But Miss Manuel sheltered him promptly.

"Here is a place next to me, Captain Fermor. Mr. Hanaper, become acquainted with Captain Fermor, and help him!" Then, in a low voice, "I see you are not too proud; and you might have humiliated me. So, I am grateful."

"I saw you at Lord Puttenham's," said Harding Hanaper, graciously, and again dipping his hand in his hair.

"Escape of another convict from Portland," said Webster, suddenly. "So I see by the evening papers. Let us drink him." And he bowed

to Fermor ceremoniously; and they all drank to him.

"Seems more like an outbreak," said Mr. Romaine.

Fermor was pleased at this company, though he recollected Romaine at once. Miss Manuel had a way of making it felt among her subjects that she wished a protégé to be respected, and Romaine, though he did not relish Fermor, and would have liked, as he had said before, "to break him like a stick upon his knee," yet still was trained to affect a sort of respect towards him. Even "Webster," ready to crunch him, as he was crunching the wing of a snipe, bones and all, and having a snarl ready, forbore, and was gracious.

Fermor was flattered by this universal homage. In the rest, towards each other, there was a republican familiarity which almost made him shiver. About "Webster" especially there was a good-humoured bitterness and shortness—long silences, during which he was busy with his snipe; and when he was casting about for more, coming out with something short and smart. Every now and again he squeezed an intellectual lemon.

"I shall help myself, Miss Manuel," he said, stretching over to the champagne. "The new Miss Jenkinson, who has just come out! Look!"

They laughed at this simile.

"The neck," he said, looking at it sideways, "so reminds me. Only her mother has taken the tinfoil, and the wires, and the cord, and made them into a mob-cap! Ha! ha!"

"For shame!" said Miss Manuel; "a poor girl just come out. She takes well."

"Not so well as this dear girl," he said, patting the flask. "Her mother may send her back to the family bin in the country."

Fermor listened amused, and said something in his old manner, which was welcomed with general cordiality. He was not altogether an outlaw, he felt. This was something like the old life. He kept up a kind of confidential talk with Miss Manuel. Under that soft light she seemed to glow, and glitter, and flash, like a precious stone.

"I ought to be at home," he said, in the old half-injured tone he was so fond of. "It is my proper place. I have been told so, at least. I am more fitted to adorn humdrum life than this sort of scene."

"Ah! you are thinking of the way I behaved to-night. I know you are," she said, looking down. "I am so strange, and behave so strangely. I have Spanish blood in me, and I must curb myself in everything I like—even mortify myself—or else I don't know where I should end!"

With a sort of glimpse of the meaning of this mysterious language, Fermor waited to hear more.

"You don't know me," she said, hurriedly. "I am one of those natures that must rule myself, or be ruled by myself. Sometimes I dare

not trust myself. Is it not better, then," she added, half piteously, "to run the risk of seeming rough, and brusque, and blunt—and, in fact, what you are not, than—?" She paused.

"Than what?" said Fermor, almost tremulously interested, for now he was seeing quite distinctly.

Romaine was looking on from across the table—perhaps listening. Fermor saw the contemptuous glance on his lip, and was pleased. Of course *he* was not pleased at the preference, and this put Fermor into great good humour.

Soon Miss Manuel fell again into the same tone. "Do you like this sort of thing?" she said, in a half melancholy tone. "I shall not have them again—I shall give them up."

"Why do *that*?" said Fermor, in gentle remonstrance.

"Why have them?" said she, looking at him.

Fermor smiled.

"You are smiling," she said, "because you know me, and how little able I am to keep to a resolution. You know I went out to-night with a firm resolve *not* to ask you here. I bound myself up, almost by a vow, and yet here you are, sitting next to me."

Again Fermor smiled. The old armoury was still bright, the sword still sharp. "What have I done?" he said, in a low voice. "I know I have many faults; but still—"

"More," she went on, "I want you to promise me one thing, that you will be generous—"

"Generous!" repeated Fermor.

"Yes, generous," she said. "You have conquered me to-night. Let me have some little victories in future. I *want* to train myself, and shall do so. Why not let me? You have everything at home, why not be content? No, we shall have no more little suppers. I want to live in the world as I have hitherto done—without heart, or softness, or esteem, or regard—in what is called the hollow world. You understand me. Do, I conjure you, let me, and rub Alfred-place out of the map of London."

Some one struck in at this point, and with a sentence came between Fermor and Miss Manuel. When she returned to him, she said, "Do you know who was to have been here to-night, or at least I asked him? Poor John Hanbury."

Fermor started and coloured. "He has come back," she said; "he has been doing the savage travelling, Gabooning it, and that kind of thing. He never cared for it really; but I suspect, poor fellow," she added, in a low voice, "he had another object besides gorilla skins. He wanted to get rid of his old self. You see," she added, slowly, "he was very sensitive, and allowed things to take hold of his mind, which another more sensible would have fought off. And the worst is, he is come back just the same as when he went out, after all the Gabooning."

Fermor did not lift his eyes. Was this a reproach of hers, or merely accidental?

"Poor soul!" she went on "poor fool!"

Webster over there would say), he is greatly altered. You remember, he was a sort of rosy, hearty, farmer-like creature. Now you would not know him; he is a dry, gaunt, silent being. Ah, poor old John Hanbury!" she added, mournfully. "He has died out with the dead past. The iron has entered into his soul, as Webster would say, in his comic way."

She laughed a little harshly, and rose. "Now," she said, gaily, "for the drawing-room; there is a better fire there."

During this little supper Miss Manuel's brother had sat silent, and apparently moody. They accepted him as such, and no remark was made. He had altered a good deal since the Eastport days, wore a large coal-black beard, while his black bright eyes roved from side to side with a look of inquiry. Sometimes he spoke; but he usually seemed to have something on his mind, and was reckoned "odd." Still he was accepted as a useful male chaperon for his sister. She was always noticed as being very kind and gentle to him, almost humouring him.

When they had gone up into the drawing-room, Harding Hanaper, who affected the character of the overworked official, who could yet by ability combine late hours and pleasure with all the drudgery of business, came over to Miss Manuel for some private talk. He leant his elbow on the chimney-piece. The others were boisterously pleasant.

"I shall have to be up at six," he said, languidly, "to make up for this. A shoal of people will be wanting answers by to-morrow. I must look into their papers before I go to bed. Old Pocock—your friend, Miss Manuel, he says—is persecuting us at the office. I believe we shall have to give him something—for *your* sake." Miss Manuel opened her great eyes with surprise, or indifference. It might be either. "I believe he would be glad to get even the Lee-Boo Coast, poor soul; he has come very low indeed."

"The Lee-Boo Coast!" said Webster, striking in; "who are you sending there? Who are Harding Hanaper's enemies? It is rank murder. We shall try you by the laws of your country."

"The average of human life on that coast," said Mr. Hanaper, placidly, "is, we are assured, from eighteen months to two years. The salary is but nine hundred pounds. So it really amounts to this: we buy a man's life from say thirteen hundred to eighteen hundred pounds. We can't get a bishop at all."

"What! the sheen of an Apron all unavailing?" said Webster, with a sneer.

"It will be vacant in two or three months," said Harding Hanaper; "the two years are nearly run out. Yet old Pocock is wild for the place. I suppose we must let him have it. We can give him nothing else. He is too old, and too old fashioned."

With gentle persuasion, and almost seductive intercession, Miss Manuel made a request to the

official. "*You must spare him*," she said, "for my sake. I will not have my old man sacrificed on the Lee-Boo Coast. He would die in a week."

"But he will die in a week if we do not send him," said Mr. Hanaper. "He looks quite worn and fretful with anxiety."

"No matter," said Miss Manuel, "he shan't be murdered officially. We shall keep him at home for his own good—like a child."

"Very well," said Harding Hanaper; "I shall recollect your orders at the proper time."

The little gay cohort was gone and scattered; and Miss Manuel was left alone with her brother. It was past two. As usual, the brightness fled suddenly from her face. A strange, weary, and hopeless look came in its place. The brother looked at her gloomily, and with eyes rolling darkly.

"This life!" she said, "my soul revolts against it. I am sick at heart. It is turning me into a demon."

"I never took my eyes off him to-night," said her brother, gloomily, "never. I was thinking how strange to have him so near me, and to be so calm and friendly with him. Ah! he little knew!"

"But this is all so wicked—so *horribly* wicked," said she, starting up. "How can I go on with it? Only to-night to see that poor soft child—whom I am really getting to love—to see her falling gradually into the power of that bold man."

His face lightened. "And she is? I thought so to-night. All is going well, then." Then suddenly changing his voice, "No, Pauline, no going back now. I won't have it. Or," he added slowly, and with a meaning that she understood, "if you are tired of the business, or have forgotten what we owe to our darling, whom at one time *you* said was murdered, as much as girl was murdered by knife, or rope, or poison, why—have done with it, then, and leave it *all* to me. *My* course shall be shorter, and perhaps sharper."

"No, no," she said, hastily. "I don't wish that. But the poor girl that loves me, who is trustful and gentle, why must *she* be destroyed?"

"Every one of them," said he, savagely. "We shall spare none. I am glad she is soft and trustful and tender. So much the better. Violet was soft and tender too. Ah, poor darling! and how was *she* treated?"

There was a pause. Pauline then spoke. "I am not equal to this sort of struggle," she said; "it is confusing me. My head seems to be flying round. No matter, as you say, we must go on."

Fermor went home that night in a state of wild exultation. He still "lived;" he was not in a state of "social dotage," thank Heaven! The old power survived. It was wonderful the curious attraction he still exercised on every one coming within his sphere. He was passive. He had long since ceased to care for these little triumphs; but the old power remained, in spite

of influences whose interest it was to hold him in contempt and subjection.

As he entered his hall the clock struck two. He went up-stairs softly, still smiling to himself. The door of the settlement on the stairs opened, and the grim Carlay figure stood before him, with a light in its hand. "Come in here," it said.

Fermor's recent triumph had made him defiant. This sudden return to the rude prose of life jarred on him. "I cannot," he said. "You must excuse me to-night. You must put off your remonstrance, or lecture, until the morning."

Mr. Carlay made three strides towards him, and grasped his arm as in a steel vice. "No trifling," he said. "You know me! Stay, then, where you are, and listen to me. I gave you a warning a short time ago. How are you attending to that warning?"

Fermor burst out in a fury. "This yoke is getting intolerable!" he said, drawing back. "What title have you to lecture me and bring me to account in this way? Once for all, Mr. Carlay, I give you notice——"

"Once for all," said the other, "I give you notice. Take care what you are doing. Do you suppose this tone of yours has any effect on me? I am not thinking of myself now, but of *her*. And I tell you solemnly, and I call Heaven to witness," here his long stiff arm was lifted, "that this must not, and shall not, go on! And I charge you to take care what you are doing. For I have snatched my daughter from death once before, and I will not have her life risked again. *Mind*. There have been desperate passages in my life that you cannot guess at. And if warnings are of no use, and it comes to this, that there is to be a choice of lives between hers and any other's—no matter whose it is—there shall not be a moment's hesitation. Her life before all: my life after hers cheerfully. So—take care. I know where you were to-night. Forswear *that* house. You will find her in the drawing-room. Good night!"

He disappeared into his settlement. Fermor was left in darkness. In presence of this being he lost his self-possession. But he was almost scared by the dark meaning of his significant hints, which he could not but accept as genuine. The cold withering sarcasm and contempt of his look and manner, as he met the injured anxious face of his wife in the drawing-room, it would be hard to describe.

"Where *have* you been?" she said.

He threw the very concentration of contempt and anger into his look and manner. "Though you may run to tell your father and protector of this speech, I *shall* tell you this much: You shall never, between you, reduce me to such abject slavery! I tell you this much: I shall never forget to-night. Fortunately, there are places, outside *this* house, where I am still liked and appreciated. I shall say no more."

Mrs. Fermor was not of the guild of suffering

wives. She was warm and quick of temper. Her bright eyes flashed. She answered him with the heat of wounded pride and repelled affection. That was all for himself, she said. He was welcome to choose his house, and to choose his company. With glowing cheeks she drew herself up with proud defiance, and said that *she*, too, was independent, and could find amusement and appreciation elsewhere. As to what he said about "tale bearing," she scorned it.

She was still in her Puttenham finery—in her tulles and flowers, with her "low neck." The wreath was on her little head, and the flowers rustled and shook as she spoke with trembling voice, and threw down this challenge to her husband.

He was astonished. "This is the way you meet me, then," he said. "With all my heart! You have me at an advantage. I have been bought and sold. This is one of the grand mistakes of life found out too late! Poor Eastport! Ah!"

Mrs. Fermor understood that allusion perfectly. It confirmed her. "Very well!" she said.

That very night, or morning rather, Mrs. Fermor went to the devonport, and, with compressed lips and trembling fingers, wrote a little note. The little note was to Mr. Romaine. It was prettily and coquettishly worded, saying that she would be at his Chambers at five o'clock; and she was so eager it should reach him promptly, that she sent out her maid to post it in the nearest "pillar box." After she had done this, her pink lips were pressed together a little vindictively, and she walked to her room in indignant triumph.

EASTERN SPIRITS.

WHILE travelling in the Levant, I fell in with a manuscript written by a French officer of rank, and what follows is a translation of a portion of it. I have no reason to think it was ever intended for publication. These narratives are so illustrative of the credulity of the Oriental mind, and throw so much light on Oriental phraseology, that I deem them well worthy of preservation.

During the months of February and March, in the year 1816, I lived in Napoli di Romania, a strong maritime city of the Morea. I was told there so extraordinary a tale of a tailor, who was at the head of his trade, that I felt it to be utterly incredible; but it was confirmed by incontestable witnesses, who for *three* years had seen with their own eyes what I am about to relate. (Here follow the names and titles of more than twenty persons, among whom are the Governor of the Province, the Aga of the Janisaries, the Defdar Bey, the principal Mollahs, the Hebrew priests, and the leading merchants, Mahomedans, Jews, Greeks, and Armenians.) Moreover, the writer says he had himself examined the tailor, who was employed by the

Pasha, and in whose veracity every confidence was to be placed.

The tailor was a Mahomedan, rather ugly than otherwise, and yet he had fascinated a Peri, with whom he lived maritally for three consecutive years, during which he ate none of the food ordinarily consumed by mortals, but was supplied with the most delicious aliments by his superhuman visitor. He warmly returned the affection of which he was the object, and only complained of the nocturnal wanderings in which he was compelled to accompany the Peri through mountains and valleys, which frightened him at first; but afterwards he became habituated to these strange travels. Napoli is a strongly fortified city on the borders of the sea, and its citadel, called Palamond, is on a very high and rugged rock. It was built by the Venetians, and is fortified according to all the rules of art, the military service being most vigilant and exacting. The gates are always closed at sunset, yet it is undoubtedly true that the tailor has been seen a hundred times, in the citadel, at different hours of the night; that he has visited the apartments of the commandant, and of many other persons who dwell within the walls. The Peri transported him thither. Sometimes she placed him on the very top of a crag, left him there for half an hour, and afterwards conducted him safely home. He had no other annoyance while the loving union lasted. He abandoned his trade, all his wants being provided for, and was perfectly happy, except for the night excursions.

Three years had thus passed, when the Peri came to him accompanied by a Djinn (one of the male genii). She told him that her race was about to commence hostilities with another race of genii—that females as well as males were called to the battle-field, and that she was about to join the army. If she returned safely their career of felicity was to be resumed, but if adverse fortune attended her, her faithful servant the Djinn would bring to him her bloody chemise, and he would be released from the vows that had linked them together, after which he might return to his ordinary habits and accustomed labour, but if he did so without the evidence of her death, the severest punishment would be his portion. He endeavoured to dissuade her from exposing herself to danger, using every argument that an impassioned lover could put forward, but the Peri insisted she was not to be judged by mortal notions, but that self-sacrifice was a higher duty among superior intelligences than with mundane man. He then asked for the privilege of accompanying the Peri; saying that his body should be her shield and buckler, and at last declared that whether she consented or not he would not be separated from her, upon which the Djinn turned on him so terrible a frown that he was obliged to seek the protection of the Peri, who asked him how he could be so presumptuous as to think of encountering an innumerable army, of which every individual was a thousand times more powerful than the Djinn,

from whom a single glance of displeasure had filled him with such alarm. If, then, he could not bear a look from a servant of the Peri, how could he dream of entering upon a contest with a race infinitely superior to mortals by the subtlety of their essence, their agility, their knowledge, and their strength? The most murderous weapons of men would be harmless when directed against the Djins. A single one of them, she said, could overpower any multitude of human beings by their superhuman powers. The tailor was convinced. The Peri took flight with the Djinn, after embracing her beloved. He was compelled to enter again into the common habits of his life, no provision being made for his sustenance. A few days only elapsed, when suddenly the Djinn appeared, shook before him the bloody garment, announced the death of the Peri, and fled. The tailor fell ill, but slowly recovered; he re-entered upon his former profession, but bears about him the marks of an habitual melancholy. He has become a rich man for one of his class—says he will never marry—for any marriage would be a sad contrast to his former happiness. All this, the narrator says, I heard from his own lips.

Another part of the MS. says:

During the time that I was on board a Ragusan merchant vessel belonging to Captain Biagio Lupi, making the voyage from Constantinople to Odessa, in the month of September, 1814, we conversed on various subjects; amongst others, Captain Lupi related to me the following fact, which was confirmed by his lieutenant and all the sailors on board, who had been eye-witnesses.

Captain Lupi had with his vessel frequently visited Alexandria in Egypt, where he became acquainted with a Jewish tailor who spoke Italian fluently, and was accustomed to act as interpreter to the captain and his crew, so that by degrees an intimacy was established between them. Arriving at Alexandria, on one occasion, the captain did not find his friend, and was told he had gone to settle at Canea, in Candia. Some time after receiving this information, commercial relations obliged Captain Lupi to proceed with his vessel to Canea. He found out the address of his friend, and learnt from the Jews of the town that this man, as well as his family, had fallen into the deepest misery, and were all victims of paralysis, which had greatly aggravated their misfortunes. The good captain immediately repaired to the house of the unhappy man, whom he found crippled in all his limbs, and his face wholly distorted and disfigured; but his intellect remained unimpaired, and his eyesight, hearing, and speech, had been preserved. His two sons, aged respectively fourteen and fifteen, were in the same condition, and only one little girl, seven or eight years of age, was altogether exempt from the paralytic malady. A Jewish woman, paid by the Israelitish community of Canea, attended upon this unfortunate family. Lupi inquired into the cause of their sorrowful situation, when a Jew informed him he had learnt from his Hebrew

brethren that beneath the staircase of the dwelling which the palsied man inhabited as tenant, there had been discovered certain indications of a hidden treasure. He purchased the house of the Turkish proprietor, and, with his wife and two sons, set to work without further ceremony, digging at the spot which had been pointed out. They found, some feet below the ground, a covering of stone, which they raised with the greatest difficulty; they were then obliged to delve still lower, and at length they came upon a coffer, which sank down the deeper as they more deeply dug. The father directed one of his sons with all speed to go in search of ropes and levers, and during the young man's absence the chest ceased to move, but, being on the same level as the excavated ground, it presented no hold. At length, on the return of the son with the materials necessary, as they thought, for the elevation of the chest, in order to take possession of the treasure, they began to remove the surrounding earth, so that the levers to which the ropes were attached might be introduced below—but here the coffer again began to sink. The father declared with an oath that he would have the treasure in spite of all the spirits in the world, and he exhorted his family to redouble their efforts. The wife and children also uttered some similar exclamation, when all at once the chest sank beneath the ground with a frightful noise, and in its place appeared a hideous animal somewhat similar to a frog or a toad, and they all found themselves flung upon the cushions in the room in that state of paralysis in which they had been found by Captain Lupi, and more than six months had elapsed since they had been reduced to that pitiable condition.

The captain, after having given them such help as friendship and humanity dictated, asked permission to tempt fortune in his turn. After much opposition on the part of the Jew, he at length obtained his consent. He then went, accompanied by four sailors, and began digging at one o'clock in the afternoon. They had scarcely reached three feet in depth, when they found the stone covering, which they raised with much difficulty. They continued to dig, and discovered the chest, upon which was a great ring, through which they passed one of the captain's bars of their vessel. But at the same moment the ship's cook (named Antonio, whom I know well, and who has confirmed the fact to me) cried out, "*Per San Antonio non ci scapperà!*" (By Saint Anthony it shall not escape us!) He had not finished his exclamation, when the bar broke, and the chest sunk with a horrible noise, as if a great quantity of tin plates, earthen vessels, and old iron, had been thrown together into a very deep well, and a putrid stench forced them to quit the place.

N.B. The Captain Biagio Lupi is favourably known at Constantinople, where he had been residing for nine years when he related this event to me. He is equally well known at Taganrog, Odessa, Jaffa, Smyrna, and in the Archipelago, and all are agreed that he is an honest and

trustworthy man. For myself, who have been intimate with him for several months at Constantinople, during a voyage of four weeks, and also forty days' quarantine at Odessa, I cannot doubt the truth of his narrative (confirmed, as it was, by the sailors), since I have always found him to be reliable, loyal, sincere, and wholly guiltless of falsehood or fraud.

The uncle of Captain Lupi one day left his country-house in the environs of Ragusa, on the borders of the sea, situated at the eighth of a league from the shore. Night overtook him while he was still engaged in fishing. At length, under the favour of a brilliant moonlight, he returned to his home. When he had accomplished about half the distance, he met one of his neighbours, who had departed this life several months before, but so like was he to what he had been while living, that for the first moment he did not remember that he had been numbered among the dead.

The defunct wished him good morning, and it was then, his memory being refreshed, that fear fell upon him; upon which the other reassured him, and reminded him that he had always been his friend. Signor Lupi was smoking his pipe at the moment of the appearance of the spectre, and in his fright had let it fall; the dead man, however, begged him to pick it up, and observed to him that it was a long time since he had smoked, and that consequently he should be glad if the captain would supply him with a little tobacco, which the other did tremblingly. Then the apparition asked for a light, and Signor Lupi then kindled a morsel of tinder, and stretched out his arm to touch the pipe which the dead man extended towards him, when he perceived that, instead of a pipe, it was a bone of which the other made use. Lupi recoiled with horror, but the defunct, without paying attention to the fear which he inspired, pretended to smoke, though no fumes appeared. They walked together to the door of the house of Signor Lupi, where the dead man, complaining that he could not go in, and that he was condemned to ramble in the fields, disappeared immediately. Signor Lupi entered his dwelling, was very ill, and no longer goes out at night.

At Napoli di Romania, I occupied, during the months of February and March, 1816, apartments over a coffee-house, the most frequented in the town. There was at that time in Napoli a Constantinopolitan idiot named Harif Aga. This unfortunate man, who was somewhat more than thirty years old, had been one of the principal officers in the household of Veli Pasha, the former governor of the Morea. Harif Aga, having lost his reason, had chosen for his domicile the café under my apartments.

The Mussulmans treat lunatics with great respect, believing them to be favoured with supernatural revelations, so that Harif Aga was often receiving, from the opulent inhabitants of the town, apparel, which they frequently took from off their own bodies, deeming it a meritorious act, as I myself have been accustomed to witness; they also sent him food to this café,

where he passed his nights, while by day he walked restlessly about, going out and coming in without adequate reason.

This idiot became much attached to me, as I had been in the habit of sending him provisions from my table, buying snuff for him, and one day had given him my snuff-box when he had lost his own. On Thursday, the 28th of March, 1816, as he was taking his supper, according to Oriental custom, about an hour after sunset, in the café, he suddenly started up, and cried out, "By my faith! to-night there will be blood shed! Blood! Bloodshed!"

Many persons who were in the café severely reproved him for making such untoward announcements, but the idiot, without allowing himself to be interrupted, and without addressing himself directly to any one, continued his exclamations of "Blood and slaughter!"

I was engaged that evening to sup in the town, and had to pass through the coffee-room, which I had scarcely entered when the demented man, addressing himself to me, said, "You, who are a stranger here, I warn you not to return hither this evening, for there will be blood shed. Blood! Blood!"

The servants joined with me in urging him to desist from anticipating such evils. "It is not I who wish it," he replied; "but it will come to pass nevertheless. Blood, blood! I see blood!"

It was not a usual thing with him to make a connected speech, or to address himself to any one, unless it were to ask for some article of clothing, something to eat, or some tobacco, and then he did it in a very laconic way. I paid no attention to the words of this imbecile, but supped in the town, and returned at half-past one in the morning. All was then tranquil, but an hour after the worshippers had left the mosque a terrible commotion broke out among the young people, and as the Turks always carry fire-arms and a dagger in their belts, they fought with pistols and swords. Two men were wounded, one of whom died a few days after, and thus the prediction of the idiot was accomplished.

During the spring of the year 1817, while residing at Yanina, the capital of Epirus, I had for a neighbour a young officer in the service of Ali Pasha. His name was Hadji Edem Aga, and his birthplace was Yakowa, on the confines of Albania and Bosnia. This young man often came to spend the evening with me. As he was at most only twenty years old, I expressed to him, on one occasion, my surprise that he, although so young, had obtained the title of hadji (Pilgrim of Mecca). He told me that he was but eleven years of age when he accompanied his father on a pilgrimage to the Holy City, and that this journey nearly cost him his life, his illness not arising from fatigue, but from an irresistible longing to see his mother and sister; and he added, that but for the beneficent exercise of skill on the part of a pilgrim from the kingdom of Morocco in his behalf, he should, without doubt, have died. I imagined that he spoke of a physician, and curiosity to learn how

his desire to see his relations had been gratified, prompted me to inquire what medicines had been administered to him. My young friend told me, with a smile, that the pilgrim had administered none, but that he had brought his mother and sister into his presence. On hearing this, my interest was thoroughly aroused, and I begged him to relate to me the particulars of the case, and this he did in the following terms, which I have translated almost word for word. It is Hadji Edem Aga who speaks.

"The preparations associated with moving, which occupied us on our journey to Salonica, whither we went by land, served to mitigate the grief I experienced on finding myself separated from my mother and sister, whom I love more than you can easily believe. During the voyage from Salonica to Alexandria, in Egypt, the intense longing to see those who were so dear to me tormented me terribly; for the imposed idleness of a tedious voyage left me at leisure to dwell upon such thoughts. Happily the sea passage lasted but six days, and the novelty of the objects which Alexandria and Cairo presented to me again enabled me to throw off my sorrow for a while. At length we left Cairo to proceed to Kosseir (a maritime town of Upper Egypt, on the borders of the Red Sea). From this place we were to embark, in order to cross to the Arabian seaport of Jeddah, near Mecca. During the journey from Cairo to Kosseir my anxiety to look upon my mother and sister was strongly reawakened, and indeed it broke upon me with such force at the sight of the Red Sea, that I wept bitterly when I thought that this gulf was about to divide me still further from those to whom I was so tenderly attached. During our stay at Kosseir, this idea became so painful to me that I fell sick, and was unable to eat, to drink, or to sleep. I had been four days in this state, when my father received a visit from a man of Morocco, who was a companion of our pilgrimage, and whose acquaintance we had made from having lodged in the same hotel together at Cairo. This stranger, whom we afterwards found to be a skillful magician, observing that my father was much dispirited, inquired the reason; he replied, that his dejection was caused by my illness, and that he was the more distressed, as it prevented him from continuing his journey, the boats being engaged to sail for Jeddah in a few days. Upon hearing this, the stranger told my father that he would cure me, provided only that he had his permission to favour me with a sight of my mother and sister. To this proposition some demur was made, as the magician would see them at the same time, a privilege which the seclusion of the harem could not allow. Nevertheless, the fear of losing me, his only son, and his ardent desire to accomplish the pilgrimage which he had undertaken, induced him, after much delay, to consent to the requisitions, and I was got up and dressed in fresh linen. The magician having then ordered some coals to be lighted, warned me to refrain from speaking to the persons who

were about to appear. My father seated himself on one side of me, and our servant on the other. The stranger then wrote some short sentences from the Koran, which he placed beneath the burning coals, and he uttered some strange words of incantation while the paper was consuming. Scarcely was this accomplished, when behold my mother and sister became visible in the middle of the room, and as they regarded me with smiles of tenderness I did not feel the slightest fear, but, on the contrary, the liveliest desire to fling myself into their arms. The apparition had lasted some minutes, when, no longer able to restrain myself (for I thought that the relatives I desired to see were really before me), I endeavoured to run towards them, but was withheld by my father, who kept me back with his hand across my body. I then cried out: 'Oh, mother! do you not say a word to me?' In an instant the figures disappeared; the magician looked at me with a terrible frown, and my father dealt me a heavy blow for my disobedience. I was in despair, and to calm me the stranger at length promised to repeat the same scene the following day. I expressed a wish that he should come and lodge with us, for his presence alone seemed to console me, and this he kindly consented to do. The following day, before commencing the proceedings, he made me take an oath upon the Koran that I would remain quiet; then by the same arts he again presented to me the vision of my mother and sister. I was already much better. Twice afterwards, during our pilgrimage, he caused them to reappear, and my health was thus completely re-established."

There resides at Libokhowa (a small town of Epirus, ten leagues from Yanina) a respectable man named Omar Kombar Aga. He is the Kiahya (steward) to the sister of Ali Pasha, who occupies a palace in the above-mentioned town. Since the year 1808, Djins have troubled the repose of the house of Omar Aga. They throw every day a quantity of large and small stones into the rooms and over the staircase and passages; they drag the furniture about here and there; they light fires in the cellar; extinguish those in the kitchen and stove; they empty vases filled with water, and even carry the dishes off the table, calling on people by their names, and playing other strange tricks. These events take place by day as well as by night, so that neither has the master of the house any peace, nor have those who reside with him. He has disbursed large sums, which he has paid to persons who have promised to drive the Djins from the house, but, up to this present time, money and means have been alike ineffectual, inasmuch that Omar Aga has been obliged to abandon his dwelling, in which, however, he continues to have magical arts exercised, in the hopes of being able to recouper it. I write on the 13th of February, 1818, and it is now just six days since he left this place (Yanina), accompanied by an exorcist, whose services he has engaged at great cost. The outlines of this case are generally known, not only to the inhabitants

of Libokhowa and the surrounding villages, but also to the whole town of Yanina. I am now about to relate some particular circumstances relating to this affair, facts that have been reported to me by eye-witnesses.

A cadi, a relation of the above named Omar Aga, told me that he slept one night in this house while it was still tenanted, and dwelt in the same room, as a young man, one of the family. During the night the Djins threw stones into the middle of the room, but without, as usual, touching the two persons who occupied it; upon this the youth observed to the cadi, "These Djins would be very gracious if, instead of stones, they would throw us roasted chestnuts." The cadi imposed silence; but what was their surprise when, about two minutes after, there fell by the side of the speaker about an oke (three pounds) of chestnuts roasted and peeled? The cadi was afraid to eat them, but, encouraged by his young relative, he profited by the generosity of the spirits, and ventured to partake of them, found them excellent, and preserved a portion of them in a box as a treasure. This account he gave me himself.

This same cadi related to me that, being on another occasion in this dwelling in broad daylight, he was engaged in the performance of the Abdist (the required ablution), previously to the mid-day prayer, when a large stone fell right on his face without doing him the slightest injury, as though it had been held in the hand of one who only touched his features with it.

The owner of this mysterious house had a son named Ishmael. One night he heard a voice calling "Ishmael! Ishmael!" several times, and fearing that his father had been taken suddenly ill, he hastened to his room, where he found him in good health, and was assured by him that he had not called him. Whilst they were speaking together, several voices were heard to cry out in the room itself, "Ishmael! Ishmael!" The word was repeated again and again. Both father and son then understood that the voices must be those of the Djins; and since that period every day and every night they shout the name of Ishmael.

In the early days of these singular occurrences, a resident in Libokhowa, named Hussein Aga, refused to believe all the marvellous things that he heard respecting this house, and he went with some other neighbours to visit Omar Aga, in order to assure himself of the truth or falsehood of the reports which had reached him. The incredulous Hussein Aga, while ascending the stairs, called out from afar to the master of the house, "Well, now! what has become of your Djins? They hide themselves!" In an instant he received such a blow that his turban fell to the bottom of the staircase, while he was himself thrown down upon the balcony. He was seized with such an excess of fear that convulsions ensued, and he was conveyed home, where he was laid up for a fortnight.

But the most interesting of all the anecdotes which I might recount respecting this dwelling, is the following:

A few weeks only had passed since the Djins had made their presence known to the owner, when, early in August, 1808, Omar Aga (the master of the house), being at dinner with several other persons, amongst whom was the before-mentioned cadi, the stones began to fall as usual all around, and even on the table itself. Omar Aga said, "You fling stones at us every day, why not rather throw us some sequins of gold?" Immediately a piece of gold money fell, as if from the ceiling, in the midst of the assembled guests. Much surprised, they examined the treasure, and found it to be a sequin, a Turkish coin of the value of eleven piastres. It was quite new, but instead of bearing the name of the then reigning emperor, the Sultan Selim, that of the Sultan Mustapha, the nephew of Selim, was engraved upon it; and on the reverse it bore the date 1223 of the Hegira (1808), which was that of the current year.

Struck with the singularity of this inscription, the company resolved to send this piece of gold to Ali Pasha, the governor of the province, and who resided at Yanina. The Pasha, also, was much astonished at the superscription. Some days afterwards the enigma was solved, for there arrived from Constantinople a courier, who brought the intelligence of the revolution which had taken place in the capital on the 28th of July, 1808, during which the Sultan Selim was deposed, and his nephew, Mustapha, raised to the throne.

A TAP FROM A FRENCH CLUB.

TO THE CONDUCTOR OF ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

HE was a profound philosopher, sir, who first remarked that whereas the lives of individual men are of limited duration, some three-score years and ten, or thereabouts—they have their slice cut for them, as we say here; they are not at liberty to cut it themselves—Corporate Bodies, Companies, and Societies in general, may continue to exist for an indefinite period. They may go on, and prosper, for centuries. They renovate themselves from time to time, by the dropping off of old members and the incorporation of young ones, so that, at the end of fifty years, they may be really more juvenile than when first started. A Society, to become extinct, must be afflicted with a very poor constitution indeed, and has probably itself alone to thank for the mournful visitation. WE, sir, are an instance of this social vitality;—not I, the inditer of these sentences, but WE, the band of brothers, the confederate few, of whom I have the honour to be, no, not an unworthy, but a humble member.

Who are we, sir? We are not, if you please, sir, The United Fogies, nor The Odds and Ends, nor The Refuge for the Destitute. We are a select party of Gallic gentlemen, in the English, not the French, sense of the word. We are none of us "noble," according to Gallic nobility, and don't want to be. We fret not at not inheriting the fiftieth or sixtieth fractional part of

a title. None of us have "De" before our name, though several have D for our initial. We are a chosen lot, sir, respectable bourgeois who constitute Le Cercle Littéraire of Petitbourg, Chef-lieu de Canton, Arrondissement de Belleville, Département de Bains-de-Mer, France. If you wish to make inquiries at the above address, they will meet with prompt and polite attention. Although other inhabitants of Petitbourg, who are not of us, may perhaps be as good as we, I still hold, sir, that we are the flower of the flock; only, on some of us, there are certain bald places on which wool, or at least a little hair, might as well have the goodness to grow.

Our president, sir, Monsieur Dufour, the ex-notary, is in himself a tower of strength: being nearly seven feet high, and robust in proportion. For cordiality, liberal ways and views, tolerant opinions, and good heartedness in general, commend me, sir, to an ex-notary, or an ex-attorney of the right sort. The wrong sort is good for nothing at all. It is not even necessary that he be ex, if everything else is as it should be.

Our body, sir, is happily composed of contrasted yet harmonising elements. We have three doctors of medicine: Doctor Legrand, straight, scientific, encyclopædic, ambitious. I should not wonder if he be our mayor one day, perhaps even our deputy. Doctor Lenoir, quick, merry, sharp, sanguine, not overburdened with orthodoxy, a first-rate operator, from tooth-drawing to leg-amputation, equally willing to cut a joke or a limb, can make a good speech, and sing a good song. Doctor Ledoux, emollient, amiable, unobtrusive, mild, but not a bit ignorant the more for that. Fancy three rival medical practitioners consenting to meet in the same room, to read papers of opposite principles!

We have also, sir, the reigning notary, whose "étude," or office, allows him but little leisure. We have farmers—I mean, gentlemen engaged in agricultural pursuits—who are glad to come and take their cup of coffee, when rainy afternoons impede their labours in the field. We have likewise purchasers of agricultural produce, benevolent individuals, who, for a reasonable profit, transmit the various kinds of grain to places where there is a good demand, from places where there is a good supply. It is useless to deny that they are corn-dealers, who, as such, have a habit of paying greater attention to the arithmetical than the literary portion of our journals. We have the juge de paix, the justice of peace, an ex-militaire, deservedly décoré, a courteous magistrate, whose office at Petitbourg is mainly to reconcile quarrels, settle disputes, and prevent people making fools (and beggars) of themselves by going to law. We have gentlemen who teach the young idea how to shoot. Finally, we have rentiers, people with incomes, whose bread is ready buttered, persons who are not obliged to do anything for their living except look out of their windows or ours. I rejoice, sir, that we now can say "Ours."

Which brings me back to the vital question, the tenacity of life with which Societies are gifted. Our society had to pass through a crisis. It did not succumb, but it fell into a trance; animation was suspended by a temporary lethargy; the functions of the Cerele ceased for a while; there was an interregnum, a hiatus maximè defendendus, a closing of doors; but no deposition, death, decess, or dissolution. Ev'n in our ashes lived their wonted fires. But we weren't yet ashes. Ourselves were all alive and well, and our furniture hadn't to go to the broker's. Our billiard-table and cues, our rules for the same, framed and varnished, our rush-bottomed chairs, our inkstand, our mirror, and our beloved barometer, merely fell into sudden repose, like the Sleeping Beauty and her suite, in the enchanted wood.

What spell brought about this state of things I cannot, sir, exactly say. I have stated, sir, that we *have* furniture, amongst which I forgot to mention our hat-pegs and our racks for holding members' pipes when not in use (some of us preferring clay to cigars); but we don't choose, like many of the London clubs, to be burdened with a building and an establishment of servants of our own. I admit that we can't afford it. We were, therefore, located over a café (whole of the first floor), with a splendid look-out on the market-place. Our attendants were the café-keeper's two fair daughters, with occasional assistance from papa. Everything went on smoothly. We quaffed our generous beer with as keen a relish as if we had been waited on by giants in livery; and I, for one, would have been content to live on so for ever and a day. But, sundry members retiring, through incapacity to appreciate the advantages they enjoyed, we became small by degrees and beautifully less—less in numbers and less in newspapers—until we had to consider (as our landlord wouldn't lower our rent) whether we should go on with our journals without our rooms, or go on with our rooms without our journals. Like the pliant reed, we bowed our head before the storm; and, like the reed, we raise our head again. We are once more afloat, set a-going, fresh started.

Hope reigns eternal in the human (society's) breast. Never say die. The world is wide. There are as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it. It is a long lane which has no turning. I group these truths together (which are not so incongruous as they sound), because they revived and resuscitated our dormant existence. After a period of patient inaction, which lasted more than an entire revolution of the planet we inhabit round the sun, we found, on the other side of the market-place—La Grande Place we call it—another café-keeper, with another first floor at our disposal. A few devoted members threw themselves into the breach, and reconstructed our recumbent edifice at their own risk and responsibility. This, sir, was true patriotism, approaching that of Curtius. The Literary Cercle of Petitbourg (with new decorations, paper-hangings, and stove), as fresh as

a phoenix, opened its wings to shelter its faithful and attached alumni. Not long ago, a circular, signed "Dufour, President," invited me, in my quality of member, to assist at its reopening one auspicious evening, at five of the clock precisely, Petitbourg time. Entrance (private, as a matter of course), Rue du Boulevard.

I went, sir. My eyes were delighted and dazzled. There were my old familiar friends; the hexagonal-framed clock, at whose round face I had so often gazed; the dial barometer I had so assiduously caressed and patted; the glass which had so repeatedly (and favourably) reflected my manly features; the billiard-table (not yet levelled), whose ball-clicking had erst enlivened my ears. On the card-table, freshened up with verdant cloth, lay the treaty, the compact of our new existence, awaiting adhesion and signature. I looked around, sir, for either an imperial eagle's quill, or a plume from the wing of the Gallic cock. Finding neither, I performed the decisive act through the instrumentality of a pen of steel. I counted the signatures. We were twenty, sir.

A few modifications in our state and style are the necessary consequences of the change. Instead of two rooms—a cabinet for reading and a salle for smoking, cards, and billiards—we have only one; but then, sir, it is a very long one. At the end next the windows (there are three windows, sir), you may read your paper, and fancy yourself in a separate apartment. At the other end, where stands the billiard-table, you may talk and smoke and easily forget the presence of readers, who do not give you the least interruption. Between those two regions, of which the stove marks the exact frontier, is a border-land several feet in breadth, where a cluster of hospitable tables and chairs invites friendly greetings and meetings from either antipodes.

Perhaps the most remarkable of our new institutions is our staircase; which is as quick the reverse of Avernus, with its "easy descent," as our Elysian locality is unlike that dismal retreat. Our ascent is easy enough to accomplish; the difficulty—partly owing to the charm of the place itself, partly owing to the peculiar construction of the stairs—lies in getting down again. As the mysteries of old could only be approached by slow degrees and through tortuous entrances, so our staircase itself is not reached at once and abruptly. Two steps, leading from the street—each so high that, to mount it, you have to raise your knee almost to your chin, while in going down in the dark, you fancy you have stepped by mistake into a well—two steps place you on a level with a glass door. The door admits you to a passage slightly sloping upward. The passage traversed, you mount four stone steps, such as might belong to an ancient temple. Another sloping passage, and then three more stone steps, which give you the idea of going to prison, conduct you at last to the foot of our staircase, which is closed by a door *not* of glass, but of perfectly opaque and solid wood. It is the

barrier which completely separates the Café below from the Cercle above—the boundary between Olympus and common earth. We are not proud, sir, nor exclusive; we only wish to keep ourselves to ourselves. Among ourselves, we are quite willing to carry out equality and fraternity.

Our staircase then, surmounted by a door half of glass, by way of welcome to the privileged, is easy enough to climb—when you haven't been black-balled. But on quitting our room to regain your domicile, it presents itself to your astonished view literally as "a flight" of steps. You might spread your wings, launch out into air, and so descend it, like Icarus. Except for its imposing loftiness, it might serve as an issue from a bathing-machine into the open sea. The breadth of its stairs has been regulated in accordance with the strictest economy of wood. Its angle of inclination may be estimated at something between forty-five degrees and the perpendicular, closely approximating to the latter. I don't think it is on the wrong side of the perpendicular. None but envious black-balled lips would venture to make that questionable assertion. Certainly, on standing at the top, and looking down, some people fancy they are seized with giddiness, with a swimming in the head; they prate about cliffs, church steeples, and precipices. It is only the influence of the genius loci, the magnetic effect of this favoured spot.

At first, one or two members who were delighted with everything else, used to exclaim in less satisfied tones, "The Staircase!" True, they are no longer in their teens. Without scandal, they have grey beards, and their faces are a little wrinkled. I began to fear that some special mechanism would have to be invented—some nice combination of inclined planes and pulleys—to accomplish the transfer of those two members from the elevation of the first floor down to level ground. A bright thought of mine, sir, enabled our common purse to avoid that outlay.

"How do you get down stairs at the Cercle?" asked one of the two, confidentially, during a walk on the road which is Petitbourg's favourite promenade. "I manage to get up, and not too slowly; but I am always afraid of going down too quickly."

Smiling triumphantly, I answered, "Thus!" accompanying the word by the action of walking backwards. "You know what it is, monsieur, to go up a ladder; you also know what it is to go down a ladder. Apply the same principle to our staircase. Grasp the rail with your hand, step down backwards, and the difficulty is completely conquered."

"Capital! You are a genius, Monsieur Vealson; I will try your plan at the first opportunity. I wonder I never thought of it before."

Accordingly, that very evening, my friend mounted at his usual pace, with the firm intention (which he successfully carried out) of testing by experiment the mode of descent I had

indicated. We were already several in number, and were commencing a discussion on things in general, when Dr. Legrand broke out with unusual gaiety: "The people of Petitbourg stop too much at home; they do not mix and meet together often enough. Each one, like a wolf, keeps to his own den exclusively. We must try to improve this state of things. We must inaugurate the reopening of our Cercle by a social meeting of corresponding import. Have you seen this proposal, Monsieur Vealson? No? The Cercle is thinking of supping together."

"Good, for the supper," I replied. "On what day? At what o'clock?"

"The day is mentioned here; and as to the hour, six or seven, perhaps. We can keep it up till ten—eleven—or midnight. Who knows?"

A second profound remark, sir, to which I would direct your attention is, that one half of the world doesn't know how the other half lives. A profounder still would be—if I might presume to make it—that three quarters of the world do not know how the other quarter sups. I am sure, sir, that you don't know how we supped at that our inauguration supper; I therefore inform you. At the first time of asking, we didn't sup at all.

On the evening when Dr. Legrand informed me of the scheme, there lay on our card-table a preliminary protocol, covered with autographs sown broadcast, as you would scatter a handful of peas, inviting subscription to a Souper, at five francs per head, for Monday the fifth of December last: the hour left open, the bill of fare likewise, the stewards and caterers unappointed. At a preparatory conference a few days previous, truffled pigs' feet had been agreed to unanimously—exactly as plum-pudding would be named in England for Christmas-day—but nothing more. What is everybody's business is nobody's business. Truffled pigs' feet had set the first step towards our supper; not being followed up, they could proceed no further. The feast of reason and the flow of soul were deferred to a more propitious date.

A second prospectus appeared on the board of green cloth, for Tuesday the thirteenth, without fail, positively, sans aucune remise, again at five francs, but per *moult*, with *du pain et du plaisir*—bread and badinage—at discretion. The honour of the Cercle was at stake. *This* ambrosial meeting must not fall to the ground.

After a serious deliberation, a plenipotentiary, with precise instructions which he was not to overstep, was appointed to purchase the material requisites. On no account whatever were the five francs per mouth to be exceeded. It might prevent our recommencing the game; and we preferred supping twice to supping once. Our financial estimates stood thus: Capital: Sixteen mouths, at five francs each, give eighty francs; exactly three pounds four shillings sterling. Please, sir, note the prodigality of the sum allotted to sup sixteen hearty men, some of them with agricultural appetites.

Proposed expenses : eight truffled demi-pieds, eight francs ; two turkeys, fifteen francs ; one smoked neat's tongue, eight francs ; eight bottles of vin ordinaire at a franc and a half, twelve francs ; sixteen cups of coffee with petit verre of cognac, eight francs ; sardines, cheese, biscuits, bread, &c., five francs ; total, fifty-six francs. Remains, therefore, a balance of twenty-four francs for cooking and contingencies.

"You won't have half enough food," I protested. "What's half a demi-pied for a hungry doctor ? What's a demi-bouteille ? What's the eighth part of a small turkey ? What's a thin slice of tongue ? Too much on a table, I allow, is vulgar and peasant-like ; too little is laughable, when it isn't sad. Before any one has supped his fill, we shall be staring at empty dishes, and sucking our thumbs. You must have something more—a leg of mutton."

"No we mustn't," shouted Dr. Lenoir. "We don't want a banquet, a nocce, a wedding-feast. We want a collation, a réunion, a pique-nique. There is plenty for all who will come. You will see."

"I know how you reckon, doctor," I retorted. "We are to sup, as we sometimes play cards, at écarté. What one leaves, goes into another's hand. The portions of those who do not come, will help to fill the plates of those who do. Henri Desjardins, for instance, cannot come. He buried his uncle only yesterday."

"He will come ; he shall. I am his medical adviser. 'Henri,' I said, 'tell people, before they make grimaces at your coming, to do for their uncles what you have done for yours—keep them out of want for ten long years.' Treat your relations well while living, I say. After they are dead, do as you please as to going out or stopping at home."

We met. What matter, sir, dull passages, awkward staircases, treats based on principles of economy, where there are unaffected politeness, friendly intercourse, and kindly feeling ? Besides, are a genial temperature, brilliant lighting, and a table spread with exquisite neatness, to go for nothing ; especially when the latter bears champagne glasses on its snowy surface ? Some conjuror of our party had undertaken to extract champagne out of our half bottle of ordinaire. The underwriters of the feast were all assembled, with the sole exception of Dr. Ledoux, who was detained by an unavoidable engagement to assist a young burgess into the world. I may truly say, sir, that we would have preferred his presence to the sixteenth share of the eatables thus left to be divided between us.

At a respectable distance from the stove were ranged sundry bottles of ruby wine, of venerable antiquity, which had kindly volunteered their aid. They requested to be allowed to warm themselves just the least in the world. Our president informed us that a deputation from Champagne, preferring a cooler climate, were awaiting our orders in the cellar—"our" cellar. Several unknown but benevolent pear-trees had contributed two handsome baskets of fruit.

And the question of precedence and place at table, sir ? How did we contrive to settle that ? A Cercle, sir, is round, has neither beginning nor end, top nor bottom. We, fragments of a circle, therefore sat round a parallelogram exactly as if it had been a circular table. Instead of the usual French fashion of placing a card in the plate of each guest, numbers were substituted for names. A comely dame handed round a plate full of folded papers. Each drew his lot, and took his seat accordingly.

As a whet to appetite, appeared the bill of fare, which I give, as well as I can, in a duoglot form :

"Menu.—Bill of Fare.

"Goodwill au Naturel, unsophisticated.—Pieds de Truffophage aux tubercules. A lofty way of expressing quadruped or porcine truffe-caters' feet, with truffles within, and potatoes without.—Sardines potted in oil, Gaieté aux fines épices, well seasoned with Attic salt.—Tendres demoiselles sans crinoline, i.e. a brace of young hen turkeys.—The best and the worst thing in the world (a tongue), stuffed with pistachios.—The Salad of the Season, Cordiality ditto.—Wines, Dessert, Coffee, Liqueurs.—General Enthusiasm."

We had enough to eat, but not an ounce too much, seeing that a couple of cooks, a couple of waiters, and a couple of nondescripts, had to find *their* supper in our remnants. At an early period, by unanimous vote, the demi-bouteilles of ordinary were cleared away, almost unfasted, to regale those who had been ministering to our comforts. At what hour we broke up, whether at ten, or eleven, you, sir, are too well acquainted with my habitual discretion even to inquire. Nor is my recollection particularly precise respecting that point. Non mi ricordo. All I wish to add, sir, is the desire that, when we next do sup again (on dit, that something may be expected to happen on Twelfth Night next), you may be there to see.

WRITTEN IN THE SAND.

"'Tis writ in sand," a current phrase has pass'd
To stigmatise some work that will not last :
And yet a phrase preceptive, which must stand
While Christendom endures, was writ in sand.

When Scribes and Pharisees to Jesus brought
The erring woman, and a judgment sought,
Eager to punish, the unthinking throng
Would, each and all, have struck to avenge the wrong.

But to the test the Holy Teacher brought
The throng unthinking, by awaking thought ;
Writ in the sand the challenge thus was thrown,
"Who's sinless, first be his to cast the stone."

Thus conscience-stricken, each withheld his hand :
O glorious Scripture ! Memorable sand !
Tablet of heavenly mercy ! Still in thee
Let us for ever a memento see.

O, where's the Christian that can look on sand
Without remembering the Divine command ?
Be it the desert vast he struggles o'er,
Or mighty margin of the sounding shore,

Or sandy hollow in the fir-crowned hill,
The atoms eloquent admonish still;
Even the humblest hour-glass has the pow'r,
To tell Christ's lesson while it tells the hour!

YOUNG TEXAS.

NOR many Englishwomen include Texas in their travels up and down the world. It may be a question with some whether a rough Texan is not a creature like a mouse or a mad bull at which it is good to scream. I don't know. I have been an Englishwoman among the Texans, and saw little to scream at. I am not sure whether there are not heroic elements in their primitive rough-and-ready way of life.

A soldier of a Texan regiment strolled beyond the lines, in Tennessee. A Federal picket espied him, pointed his musket, and cried, "Surrender!" "Well, I suppose I must, seeing I am without arms," replied the Texan. And he dropped passively into step with his captor, who, in his turn, "dropped" his musket, and proceeded to march into camp with his prisoner. The Texan ranger was "without arms," it is true, for a bit of rope in his hand was either unobserved or unregarded, till it was thrown as a lasso round the Yankee, and his arms—arms as to the flesh and fire-arms—were bound closely to his side. "I reckon you had better surrender to me now," said the Texan.

There was no help for it. A Texan with his hunter's wit and a handful of rope might pinion Achilles himself, I believe. "Roping" a kitten or an unlucky hen with a few yards of thick cord, had been the fun of his childhood; to rope beef and wild horses, had been the ambition of his boyhood. Just as a young English boy measures his height against the full-sized cricket-bat of his elder brother, so does the boy of Texas aspire to the "cabros" and the "lariat," two kinds of lasso, in the use of which the Texan vies with his accomplished neighbours the Mexicans. The cabros is made of a thick rope of horsehair, the lariat of strips of raw hide plaited. A third kind of lasso, requiring no kind of preparation, is the long pliant stem of a wonderful "vine," in fact a leguminous plant, which, from a single root, sometimes spreads over an acre of ground on the sandy shores of Texas and Florida, where it is used as a substitute for rope. It produces a large bean two inches across, which has a dark, hard polished skin or shell, that, when scooped out, may be formed into a little heart-shaped box or bottle.

I knew the young son of a Texan general, who may be accepted as a fair sample of the upper-tendency of his native state. On first acquaintance, this quiet, diffident, and daintily-dressed youth seemed to have been built and bred for the drawing-room only. Yet there seemed to be a touch of Munchausen himself in the domestic adventures which he would incidentally mention, without boast, as matters of nearly every-day occurrence. And when setting off to join his regiment in Mississippi, he decided to leave his

favourite chargers at home, because, said the youth, "I prefer a young mustang fresh from the prairies. I will buy one and tame it myself, and teach it to do what I please, without having its wild spirit subdued." He would bring an unbroken horse into training in the course of a few hours' ride. "Training" enough for him, who had learned to ride as soon as he could walk, and had trained his own horses from the day he had first caught them with his lasso.

Perhaps no other of the American States furnishes so much variety as the "Young Giant," named first among the Indians, Texas, which is, by interpretation, "Plenty." In its towns may be met with every shade of character; the savage Indian, the hardy pioneer, the educated gentleman. There are Mexicans, Indians, negroes, half-breeds, outlawed ruffians, industrious emigrants from all countries, with native Americans, some showing northern energy, and some showing the luxuriousness of the south. In climate almost tropical along the Gulf and the Mexican frontier, the severity of northern winters sweeps over the high Texan table-lands to the north-west. Its people are naturally warlike. They had scarcely cooled down from their war of independence in 'thirty-six, before their spirit was stirred by the annexation of their republic to the United States in 'forty-five, an event attributed to the influence of the influx of settlers from the north, which still is a sore subject to the native Texan. Born upon battle-grounds, imbibing the spirit of war with their mother's milk, and nursed in every skill and craft for self-protection against Indians, against open white enemies, and against wild beasts; self-reliant and vigilant in their solitary homes; the genuine Texans are the best of soldiers, with eyes all round their heads, and the ears of an Indian.

That is something of a country into which you take a rural walk subject to adventures with wolves, bears, panthers, colloquially "painters," leopard-cats, deer, buffaloes, foxes, peccaries, wild hogs, wild horses or mustangs, wild cats, racoons, and opossums; to say nothing of rattlesnakes, and the host of less dangerous, though still mischievous creatures, among which they live. No wonder that the Texan country gentleman and his sons consider it etiquette to decorate themselves with bowie-knife and revolver. The young gentleman before mentioned was at home in Texas. How did he amuse himself with his own country sports? First with the lasso. Thus he tells of the killing of a "beef," or wild bull, on the prairies.

"When we have picked out the beef we wish to kill, and have so chased him away from the herd as not to alarm the rest, I 'rope' him. This can be done either round the horns, or the legs, to throw him in a convenient position. When down, I seize his tail, get it between his legs, and hold it tightly strained over the uppermost haunch, sitting upon him to get a good hold, and to keep the limb bound firmly while somebody shoots or stabs him. That is all. It is only a few minutes' work. I have merely to

keep my seat and hold him down while the other fellow takes his aim. Sometimes a beef will struggle so much while thus bound down, that I have known him kill himself by dashing his head against the ground. Sometimes when we are after him, if he is very wild, he will chase the horse, who lets him follow for a time, within a yard or so, and then suddenly wheels round and flanks him, so that we can rope him in a moment. The horse helps as cleverly as any man, watching the sport and calculating his own movements almost without any bidding from the rider. As soon as the end of the lasso is made fast to the raised pommel of the saddle, the horse is on the alert. When a beef is caught by the horns, as the rope becomes too loose or too tight the horse retreats or advances, suiting himself to every movement, till the beef falls to the ground."

One day our young Texan was walking along the edge of a "timber," as the strips of forest, which for the most part border the rivers, are commonly called, when he heard a great hissing and spluttering overhead. He looked up and saw a large wild cat snarling in the forks of the branches, where she had a nest of kittens. She was in the act of pouncing upon him, but he had only to point his gun with alacrity and bring the wild cat to the ground. If he had not done so, the flesh would, in the next moment, have been torn from his face and neck.

Another day, young Texas was riding fast and saw what he took to be a pine-branch lying across the road. The tint, and the regular scaly bark of what is called the long-leaved pine, give a snake-like appearance to fragments of branches which may be lying along the edge of sandy roads. The Texan was so accustomed to such fragments, that in this case he mistook a snake for a tree branch. As for me, I have often run away in alarm from a tree branch, mistaking it for the snake it so strongly resembles. The Texan's horse, in this case, seemed to be as much deceived as his master, for he galloped quietly over the reptile without the usual sign of terror. This proved to be an unusually large rattlesnake, seven feet long, and thick in proportion. As the horse passed, the snake glided into the long grass by the roadside, and attracted the attention of the rider, who was not willing to let it escape so easily. He leaped from the saddle, and called to his servant to come and thrash it out into the open space, intending to despatch it according to the usual method; namely, by seizing it promptly and firmly by the tail, and then whipping off its head before it had time to turn and bite him. Young boys in Texas are expert at this, while even small children will snatch up a stick and, having given the animal a sharp blow or two to break its spine and disable it, repeat the blows upon the head till that is crushed. Great quickness is all that is required for safety in dealing thus with venomous snakes, yet no boy of nine or ten years old in the Southern States has either fear or mercy for a snake, however dangerous. And so when here there was a big

snake not to be spared, Sambo thrashed the long grass as furiously as if he were working a flail on a barn floor. "Here's his head, boy," cried Young Texas at last. "Thrash away. Again! Quick! Now for him!" Now out glides the long lithe creature with its eyes steadily fixed upon its enemy. The youth leaps lightly over it to seize it by the tail, when he finds that the tail has been too much injured by Sambo's flail to be either safe or pleasant holding. In an instant the revolver is pointed and a bullet pierces the uplifted head. There are more ways than one of meeting an enemy; more enemies than one to meet; more weapons than one in readiness.

Sometimes, while Young Texas is breaking in a mustang, he may be threatened at one moment by wild cats above, and snakes below, with, perhaps, a bear, a boar, or a panther within hail. But he comes safe out of any difficulty. With a firm, sure seat in the saddle, one hand at least is free. His lasso is ready, his barrels are all loaded, his knives and daggers sharp. He tames his wild mustang, so far as a Texan's notion of "taming" goes, and rides home to dinner, without giving so much as a second thought to the little brushes with wild cats and rattlesnakes.

Great faith is put in whisky for cure of the bite of a rattlesnake. The person bitten is required to drink the raw spirit until he is "dead drunk," and is then left to sleep himself sober. By the time he awakes with restored faculties, the intense stimulus, or whatever else the healing power may be, is said to have carried the system safe over the poison's period of dangerous activity. I once heard of a bitten man who drank above a quart of raw whisky, before the desired symptoms of intoxication would appear. That bushranger must have been a very seasoned toper, or, if the cure be on the homœopathic principle, he must have received a terrible amount of poison in his foot to need so large a corresponding dose of poison in his head, to counterbalance it.

To "rope" a mustang is another of the regular sports or duties of the Texan. The wild horses will often, in their exceeding fierceness, gallop towards those who approach them, and finish by a vicious leap of eight or ten feet over a stream, to attack a man. A cruel recklessness is shown in taming these beautiful creatures, which abound in such vast numbers as to be sometimes sold for only a few dollars apiece. In being caught, they may be so far injured as to become useless, and frequently they are brought to a cruel death by the rough handling and hard riding they undergo. If not immediately wanted when caught, they are branded with the captor's mark, and turned loose again, or "hobbed," to prevent their straying far away. "Hobbing" is tying the fore legs together, so that the mustang can proceed only by little leaps—a movement grotesque enough in the elegant creature naturally so agile. Mustangs, however, submit to the hobbing more passively than one would expect;

and when thus fettered, take to their new pace as if it were not altogether uncongenial, and gambol off in a frolicsome, imbecile, rocking-horse style, to the great amusement of bystanders.

Hundreds of thousands of heads of branded cattle roam over the vast prairies of Texas. Every animal must be branded before it is turned adrift; then it feeds itself, and multiplies without cost and with little risk to the owner. To ensure this sort of property against theft, the laws are strict, and the penalty for breach of them is heavy. Each owner has his own registered mark or brand, and when cattle exchange hands, they are required to be re-branded, so that a theft is easily detected. In Texas and the Far West, where traffic and barter of horses is very common, one may see an otherwise splendid mustang barred and scarred with the marks of its various owners, till it looks like a new form of zebra.

Living in a country which has only to be "tickled with a harrow to laugh with a harvest," where giant flocks and herds "realise" at a wonderful rate, where abundance of animal food may be had for the shooting, and delicious fruits for the gathering, it is no wonder that the planter takes to hunting as his one amusement, almost his one occupation. The Texan gentleman has no trouble over his crops; his harvests rarely fail him. His land produces the finest cotton, and an average crop of twenty bushels of Indian corn per acre, fifteen bushels of wheat, and one hoghead of sugar, besides molasses. He has nothing to do in his country life but to amuse himself; and with early and constant practice in self-defence it would be strange indeed did he not prove the mighty hunter that he is.

No Texan household is complete without a score or more of dogs. The father of my young friend kept fifty or sixty of his own, for whose exclusive use a "beef" was killed every week, besides their other food. Then at certain seasons he had visiting him as many as a hundred dogs. These did not come to him in packs of hounds which had their appointed kennels and keepers; though many of the wealthy planters do keep regular packs of deer-hounds, bear-hounds, and fox-hounds, of good "old country" parentage. Over and above these regular packs, the hundred dogs added to those of his household were the companions of the gentleman's guests, and might be as various as is the population of the country. Each dog would have its own character and accomplishment, in virtue whereof it had been distinguished by its master's favour and promoted to its rank of comrade. "Love me, love my dog," in Texas means no less than "Invite me, invite my dogs." So it is that at one Texan country-house a party of sportsmen will assemble to go off on a hunting expedition, each bringing several horses, a dozen or two of dogs, and a few attendants. In such a house at such a time, the dogs are everywhere. Great burly bull-dogs, gentle enough among friends, mastiffs, pointers, setters, and mongrel

curs of rare idiosyncrasies, are leaping or sprawling over all the floors, whisking their great heavy tails about, and by their rough caresses flooring all the toddling children, black and white, of the establishment. The servants dare not lose sight of the food for a moment, nor leave unguarded and open any door that leads to victual. At the particular house of which I speak, one day the black-faced, white-gilled, white-gloved Sambo was in the act of summoning the general and his guests to the dining-room, just as another ebony attendant made a rush to the kitchen for something forgotten, leaving the door open in his haste. The general's family and their guests entered from the front of the house, followed, of course, by an expectant troop of keen-nosed quadrupeds. But these had been less keen than their victorious kindred, who had already stormed the garrison in the rear, and were sacking it. What a sight for hungry sportsmen. Off dashed Scamp on the appearance of his master, making a straight bolt between his legs with a roast turkey in his mouth. Springer and Scuff had a boiled turkey on the floor, and were snarling over the plump mounds of meat they had torn from its breast-bone. Flash, Pounce, and Biggs, with their fore legs and bodies half over the table, were gnawing at the prime joint of the feast, and little Wasp was on the table running from one dish to another, her nose dripping with gravy. Lily, Crawler, Diver, Major, Tearum, Tiny, and Graceful, were all ready for the attack, but having arrived on the field a moment too late, caught sight of their masters, and assumed an expression of the meekest innocence, doing their best to look as if they had been abstaining out of high moral considerations, and now claimed to be rewarded for their virtue. To this end they all wagged their tails and their very bodies till they were in danger of wagging themselves in two. As for the guests, they were all used to these little incidents, and as it would be breach of etiquette to kick a neighbour's dog, it was only where a man happened to stumble against one of his own transgressing favourites that a culprit did not get off with impunity, and with whatever he could carry away for his more private refection. "We'll soon have something more," said the host; the guests declared their willingness to wait; and probably the only disconcerted person in the household would be Mrs. Candace, the cook, who had been just about to light her pipe and lie on the door-step for her evening gossip. "Texas" means, as aforesaid, "Plenty" and there is at all times "plenty" on hand. Plenty in the larder, plenty in the meat-house, plenty in the dairy, plenty in the poultry-yard. To guillotine a few more fowls, and plunge them into boiling water that their feathers may be stripped off the more quickly, is only the work of two minutes. Meantime the irate Candace has waylaid the unlucky Mercury who left the dining-room unguarded, and, seizing his elaborately arranged wool in her double grip, has pommelled his pate against the white-washed wall until his crop grows grey with his

struggles, and his astonishing shirt-collar becomes as rumped as his dignity. By the time she has had it out with Sambo, her black nymphs reappear, laden with fresh supplies, which she and they proceed at once to dissect. "For," says Candace, "the massa and dem t'other gennelfolks can't spec no more *big* vittles dis day; and pretty nigh sundown now." So in another half-hour the table is replenished, and the guests sit down to the grilled, broiled, fried, and otherwise cooked joints and morsels of the creatures who were so lately rambling over the prairies, or cackling on Candace's doorstep.

Next morning betimes the same guests rally forth, armed with weapons of all kinds, an organised caravan, with their two hundred dogs, their provisions, attendants, and camp equipage. The grand object of their day's or week's sport may be to "bag" a score or two of deer, to catch mustangs, to kill bears, or to entrap panthers. Among the mongrel hounds are probably some whose peculiar talents tend towards the smaller game. The masters make a virtue of necessity, and acquiesce in anything. All comes under the head of "sport." Day sport, night sport, sport fierce and sport gentle; dogs for each sort of sport, and game for all.

Of the savage animals that venture near to habitations, the agile and vicious wild cat is perhaps the most to be feared. It is very large and fierce, and bold in its attacks. One day our host was riding, unarmed, but close to his home, when he was attacked by two wild cats that sprang out of the wood by which he was passing. With a swift sharp cut of his whip he sent the smaller one, apparently only half-grown, back to the woods, just as the larger was about to make a spring at him. Without pausing he glided off his horse on the side away from the wood, ran to pick up a stout stick, and, turning quickly, saw the fierce creature already sitting upon the saddle, grinning viciously, and preparing for another leap. The spirited horse did not know what to make of his strange rider, and showed signs of impatience. His master, with a few words of encouragement quieted him, while he himself stood, club in hand, watching the movements of his assailant. As she still sat on the saddle, the general rapidly picked up some clumps of wood, advanced, and hurled them at her. This aggravated, without injuring her. Snarling and spitting all the while, she leaped towards him, rearing herself upon her hind legs so as nearly to reach his face. The general did not loosen his hold of the club, and at the angry beast's next spring, received her with a blow that sent her reeling back. Instantly recovering her feet, the infuriated creature sprang high towards him, as if with the intent to bound on his shoulder. The gentleman again hurled her off with his club, and again she flew at him. A fierce combat ensued: the extreme rapidity of motion, and the long springs of the savage brute, rendering her a dangerous antagonist. The contest lasted several minutes, but by repeated and successful

blows, the tenacious animal became less and less able to spring, and at length, of course, was killed. As for me, I used a woman's privilege to keep out of the way of danger, and had no sort of adventures. Unless hearing a wild cat and being alarmed thereby, be one.

On returning from a walk, in which a little boy, Cæsar, had been my attendant, I had come within sight of the negro quarters, when I heard a loud and singular screech from a wood bordering the cotton-field in which we were.

"What is that noise?" I asked the boy:

"That's a *wild* cat, that is!" And he looked askance, to measure with his eye the space between us and the woods.

Our path lay rather towards than from the part whence the yells came. I stopped a moment to consider whether it would be better to go on, or to wait and call for assistance from the cabins. The boy watched my face with an evident suspicion that I might be considering whether a wild cat wasn't a thing to go and look at.

"That'll bite you ef you go thar. BITE. Oo—oo—ff——" drawing up his huge lips with a grotesque mock shudder.

"Where is she?"

"Hers in dem woods over you. A comin' to Aunt Peggy's. Her steals Aunt Peggy's meat, an' her chickens; she do."

"Are you afraid of it?" I asked.

"No—n—oo," said he, contemptuously, "I runs."

Partly reassured, I asked, "Will she fly at us if we go past there?"

"*She—e* can't fly," said the child, compassionating my ignorance. "*She run—ns.*"

I stood corrected for my figure of speech, and said, "Then I must run too."

Upon this Cæsar looked up with an incredulous and amused expression, and said, "Ken you run? Ken—you—run away from a wild cat?"

"Yes; if I try, I can."

Cæsar looked still more puzzled and unconvinced, and as we walked on he muttered, "She can't ketch *me*. I'd outrun *her*."

Keeping my eyes towards the woods, I hastened to reach the gate of the field near the cabins which we had to pass, but Cæsar continued to ponder and to murmur, "*I runs. Run—ns,*" as if he thought I had not fairly comprehended the nature of the feat. "*Ru—n—ns,*" glancing into my face to see whether he might venture to show what he meant by running. "*Run—n—ns*" he repeated, clenching his fists and raising his elbows in a threatening manner, as his eyes were fixed on the gate. "*R—r—r—*" He drew a long breath, screwed up his thick lips to keep it in, and off he set. The temptation for display was too strong. He *did* run; or fly, or spin, or whirl, arms and legs everywhere. The spokes of a wheel were nothing to him. Then finishing off with some incomprehensible summersault, he righted himself at the gate, and turned round with a face which plainly said, "That's

what I call running. It would look mighty funny to see white folks get over the ground like THAT."

Laughing must be as efficacious in keeping up the courage in real dangers, as whistling in imaginary perils; for in laughing at that revolving scarecrow, and in hurrying to the gate, I forgot the wild cat and her screeches.

The bears of Texas and the Far West are another dangerous set. But you rarely find a Texan shrink from an encounter with them, even if he have only a knife wherewith to defend himself. I knew a man who lost his arm in an attack of this kind. A bear assailed his dog, a favourite hound, and the man chanced to have no better weapon about him than a pocket-knife. With rash impetuosity he ran towards the bear, and plunged the blade into his throat. The wound was not deep enough to do more than anger the beast, and, open mouthed, he fiercely turned upon the man, who received him with repeated and well-aimed stabs. In the course of this frightful struggle the man's arm was bitten off below the elbow. But this only rendered him the more determined. The dog, released, joined in the combat. With his remaining arm the dauntless Texan persevered, dodging and stabbing at his clumsy though powerful adversary, until the brute was killed, and the dog's life saved.

Daring and rash as such a conflict appears, it is by no means uncommon. Even the women in those border countries acquire a skilful use of fire-arms and other defensive weapons. Often left alone, or with only young children, in their isolated dwellings, they might become an easy prey, were they not thus prepared. It has been among these daughters of the West that we have heard of feats of daring and courage during the civil war, that may chill the blood of our own gentle English girls. Women have joined the ranks with their lovers and husbands, or have resolutely avenged their death, never pausing or resting until revenge has been accomplished. Even in more civilised Virginia women have prepared themselves, by regular practice and drill, to defend their own homes when they shall have parted with their last male relative. The young ladies of Texas, who combine as many characteristics as the state which gave them birth, are daring riders. They manage a high-mettled steed with as much ease as they handle a revolver; and in their rides—races they may often be called—excite their horses to full speed with the rattle of a snake. The terror of rattlesnakes evinced by the horse has already been mentioned; his ears are exceedingly alive to the sound; taking not very tender advantage of which the fair equestrians will fasten a snake's rattle to their hats, and shake it.

At the same time it must be remembered that the young ladies of Texas are numbered among the best educated and most accomplished of the South. Moreover, from the good influence of their northern immigrants, they are said to excel as much in the management of a house as

of a horse; and, to their credit be it asserted, that so far from despising the useful occupations of life, they finger the rolling-pin as skillfully as the piano.

CLEMENT CAREW.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

I WAS walking one afternoon with my friend Henry Bertram, who, as everybody knows, is one of the zealous hard-working curates of the populous parish of St. James in the East, when we were suddenly overtaken by a violent thunder-storm; and the rain, which presently came down in torrents, made quite a river of the streets, and drove every one under cover who could possibly find one. There were no porches in that poor locality; but my companion, who was thoroughly familiar with it, remarked that he would take me to the abode of a friend close by, who would only be too flattered to afford us shelter. "And let me tell you he is worth knowing," Henry Bertram added; "more so, perhaps, than any one in my district. I consider him one of the most remarkable men I ever came across."

"In what way?"

"Well, if you can get him to tell you his story, as he once told it me, you will soon see. He is a striking instance of the effect upon the mind of early impressions. He will tell you of a curate, who, dead now many years, has exercised, and exercises still, a wondrous influence upon his heart and life. I had heard of the man before I ever met Clement Carew, and marvel not at the way in which his memory is cherished and venerated by those who knew him. Were there many such labourers in our vineyard, we need fear neither the dissensions nor the proselytism of which we hear so much in these days."

As Mr. Bertram spoke, he stopped before a small shop of respectable exterior; on entering which, we found the owner, a carpenter and small upholsterer, busily employed in polishing up a piece of furniture just completed. He was so engrossed in this occupation, that he never heard us enter; and I had a moment or two in which to examine him unobserved. I saw nothing very remarkable. A short square man, about forty, of considerable personal strength, with fair hair and reddish whiskers, a broad forehead, and earnest countenance—a man to do what he did thoroughly, as he was doing this now—to be conscientious himself, and, perhaps, stern in his dealings with others; that was what my rapid glance told me concerning him. The severity of his expression, however, passed away at once, as he looked up and met my companion's kindly greeting. In his full serious eye, too, there was something faithful and affectionate; his frank smile disclosed a set of short teeth (generally an indicative of strength), set together evenly as the keys of a piano; and his manner betokened both cordiality and intelligence.

Mr. Bertram introduced me as an old college friend, and added, that he had inspired me with a desire to make his acquaintance. "For you

know, Clement, I always say that your story is better worth hearing than any sermon; and you have not the dislike to speak of it that many might have in your place."

The man drew himself up, and laying down the leather with which he had been polishing, surveyed me thoughtfully, as though measuring my mind with his own, to see whether we could in any way fit in, so to speak. Then, turning to Mr. Bertram, he answered:

"I've no dislike now, sir. I had once, when opinion was more to me than it will ever be again. You see, I've lived down all that—lived it down long."

He spoke with a certain grave decision; like one who has reflected upon, and is satisfied with, his own conclusions. I began to feel an interest in him, and a conviction that his story would be worth hearing.

I will not repeat the conversation that followed, but proceed to give that story as nearly as possible in his own words.

"My father was a small working carpenter, and I may say a thoroughly honest man. He and mother prided themselves on the character they bore, and on having always kept clear of the parish—no easy matter in those days. We lived in a crowded and unhealthy part of B——, and our windows, like many in the court, looked on to a burying-ground, which was so choked up with graves, that skulls and bones were constantly being turned up when they went to make a fresh one. The neighbourhood was seldom free from one kind of fever or another, and children died off there sadly. Mother always said it was the bad air from the graveyard that killed her three children, coming between me and little baby Betsy, and that kept her so weak and ailing herself. But though she often talked with father of moving to a healthier quarter, they never did so, for the very bad name of our place made the rent cheaper, and we had no money to spare for moving. It was not till the year of the dreadful fever which raged in B——, and struck down more than a third of the folks in our court, that the authorities turned their attention to the fearful state of those crowded dwellings, and the unwholesome atmosphere that surrounded them; and caused the cemetery to be finally closed. Alas! for too many that precaution came too late!

"I was just fifteen at that time; and for two years had regularly attended the Reverend Ernest Penrhyn's Sunday school, as well as certain evening lectures organised by him in our district. He was only a curate, and a very poor one; but so remarkable a man, that perhaps before I speak of what he did, I had better say something of what he was.

"There are some human beings, whom the Almighty has gifted with a strange power of leading their fellow-men, not by words alone, nor even example, but by some innate faculty they possess, of which they themselves are often scarcely conscious. Mr. Penrhyn was one of these. Simple, truthful, indescribably earnest, he never seemed to bestow a thought upon himself.

His whole heart was in his work; and he gloried in that, with a great pride—a most entire devotion. Early and late he was about it, scarcely seeming to feel fatigue. Wherever there was suffering or need, there you found him, helping, advising, encouraging. He was the most cheery of human beings. I have seen other excellent clergymen, doing their work in a faithful spirit, but I never saw one who laboured with such real love for his duty as he did. It was that love which kept him up, often under a degree of pressure that would have crushed many a stronger man. He had a young wife, who was indeed his helpmeet. The bishop was once heard to say that Mrs. Penrhyn was as good as two ordinary curates; and he spoke the truth. She was sweet to look upon; with dark hair and eyes, and fresh blooming cheeks that reminded you of opening roses. He, on the contrary, was fair, somewhat pale, with kind blue eyes, golden hair, and a general delicacy of look that struck you painfully. He was about thirty-five at the time of which I speak; she some six years younger. Sir, I wish I could bring that pair before you, as I used to see them—as I see them now. They were indeed lovely and pleasant in their outward appearance, and still more so in their lives."

The man paused. His gaze was upon me, but he did not even see me. He was looking far back through the vista of years into the past. And I can hardly describe how, as he proceeded in his narrative, he drew me along with him, especially when he spoke of the Penrhyns, causing me to picture them as he beheld them, and to sympathise with every feeling of his that they called forth. He spoke with extreme quietness, as well as self-possession; seldom making even a grammatical error—never using a vulgar expression; but sometimes, when his feelings were more than usually affected, his voice would rise, his eyes kindle with a glowing light, and he would become at once both graphic and eloquent. The longer I listened, the more I felt that this was indeed no ordinary man.

"I can hardly tell you, sir, how we boys loved Mr. Penrhyn—the master, as we called him. When first he came to that district there had been some unruly spirits who had tried to ridicule his efforts and his teaching; but he soon got the better of those, partly by firmness, partly by love. (He could be firm enough, and angry enough too, on occasion.) But now he had it all his own way in the schools; for, you see, we were so entirely convinced of his excellence, and that whatever he did was done out of a loving interest for our good, that we followed him blindly, as the young will follow a leader they both reverence and regard. And it was not only in school-hours that we saw him. At his lectures, his evening meetings, his visits at our homes, we were accustomed to speak to him freely and without fear. He liked it. He used to say that his boys should consult him in everything—their pleasures as well as their duties, and in time the two might become identical. And we did so. He would take the same pains

to mend a broken toy for some sick child, or to teach a stupid boy some new game, as he would to make his lectures entertaining, or the Christmas magic-lantern laughable. He was always trying to infuse a drop of happiness into our cup. No heart in this world ever contained more of the milk of human kindness.

"I did not know till later how poor Mr. and Mrs. Penrhyn really were; but had their income been ever so large, they would always have shared it with those who needed, for it was their principle as well as nature to do so. A strong regard existed between them and my parents; and when father was taken ill of the fever, among many in our court, the master gave him far more than his proper share of time and attention. He nursed him like a brother; he soothed his dying ears with the blessed promises of the gospel. Well do I remember that time of horror and dismay—some so selfish in their terror—some so generous and self-denying. Night and day Mr. Penrhyn was up and about; where the fever raged worst, and people were afraid to venture, there you might be sure to find him, watching, comforting, doing all that it was in the power of man to do. It was encouragement in itself to see his kind face, and hear his cheery voice. People said he brought hope and consolation in with him. His wife, too, who, for her child's sake, remained at home, was always preparing comforts for the sick; ready to give him a cheerful welcome whenever he was able to snatch a few hours' respite from his labours, which was but seldom. Well, sir, father died, as did many another round about us, and the very day he was buried, sweet baby Betsy took ill too. Poor little thing! Though so young, she was as fond of the master as any of us. At the worst of times he had always found a moment to give her a jump and a toss when he came to see us, and she would crow with delight when she heard his step. But now she lay in mother's arms all fevered and helpless; and when the master, looking at her, said with quite a break in his kind voice, 'What, my Betsy bad too?' she could just put out her little hand, and make shift to stroke his coat sleeve, and that was all. She died in three days—our little baby Betsy—the pet of us all—that had been father's solace for many a month—she died, and was taken to lie by his side in the graveyard near. Well, she was better with God than with us, as we had too good reason to feel before long.

"Mother did what she could for her neighbours in that fearful time; she said it wasn't in nature to see such an example as the master's, and not try to follow it. There was one family near us named Steele, about one of whom (there were but three of them) I must now say something. My father and Philip Steele's had been friends for years, and as children young Philip and I had been playmates; but when we two lads went to the master's school, a spirit of rivalry sprang up between us, and a strong mutual dislike. He was a couple of years my senior, very handsome, and had a certain

plausible way with him, which made people like him. I, on the contrary, was naturally grave, taciturn, and reserved. Yet I think in his heart the master preferred me, though he was far too wise and too just to betray it openly. Indeed, his quick eye having detected the ill will that existed between us, he more than once took us each to task for it. But he didn't succeed in making us love each other any the better; and when mother nursed Phil in a dangerous attack of the fever, and by God's mercy brought him through, my heart didn't warm to him as it should have done to a fellow-creature just escaped from death; and I only said he was lucky to have had such a nurse, and he'd do well to remember it. He hated me worse than ever from that very moment; and perhaps there was cause.

"Mr. Tudor, the rector of B—, a very learned man, but said to be under the rule of his handsome wife, had quitted the town as soon as the fever appeared. He was not strong, and she persuaded him that he was more liable to take the disease in consequence; a great error in my judgment; for whilst numbers of the most robust were struck down in a moment, many who, like mother, had been long ailing, were altogether spared. However, Mr. Tudor went, leaving his curates to do the work of the parish in that time of fear and of distress. And nobly they did it too, never sparing themselves. But they were sadly over-worked. One after another broke down under the strain; and one sultry afternoon, when the fever had quite disappeared from our court, it was whispered that Mr. Penrhyn was down with it. Then mother locked up her poor rooms, got a neighbour to take charge of me, and set off to give what help she could to the master and his dear young wife.

"She found him very bad: for a whole day and night the doctors despaired of him. But his day's work was not yet over. He rallied, and the moment he was fit to move he was ordered to the sea-side, to try what change of air and rest would do for him.

"Meanwhile, I had not been improving in temper and disposition. My dislike to Philip Steele had increased to a detestation I took no pains either to conceal or overcome. We were always bandying bad words—always on the verge of a furious outbreak. I was wild that my mother should have nursed such a brute as I thought him; and he was equally savage at being continually reminded of the obligation. 'I didn't want your mother!' he would say, glaring at me; 'I didn't send for her. I wish she'd kept herself to herself, I'm sure!' 'And I wish she had too,' I once answered; 'I wish you'd been let die in the fever—I do! and an excellent job too!'

"The moment I had said it my conscience smote me. Was that the spirit my master had tried hard to teach us? But it was too late to unsay it, and I saw from the evil look in his eyes that he would not forget the speech.

"After fever generally comes famine—it proved

so in our town. Never had there been such distress before. The unions were full to overflowing, and there was literally no work to be got. Mother tried hard to earn enough for our support, by taking in washing; and I helped her all I could. But, one by one, our little articles of furniture went to pay for rent and food—not good wholesome meat, but dry bread, with which to keep body and soul together. In father's lifetime we had never known want; we had lived hard, but had never been without a sufficiency to satisfy hunger, and often something to spare for our poorer neighbours. But now times were changed. I never knew what it was to feel satisfied. I envied the meanest shop-boy who had a meal to sit down to—the lowest scullion in a gentleman's plentiful kitchen. Mr. Penrhyn had promised to get me into some upholsterer's shop, where I might learn the trade thoroughly, of which father had already taught me a good deal; for he was a skilful workman. But my own wish was for service in some family where I could be sure of food and clothing, and see something of the world besides. We longed for Mr. Penrhyn's return, who, we knew, would both advise and assist us.

"Meanwhile, mother, who had resisted the terrible epidemic, began to sink under what seemed to be perpetual fever. She had never been strong, and the labour and privation she now underwent were more than she could bear. I did my duty by her in that sad time; but I couldn't save her, dying as she was for want of food and rest. One afternoon she was lying on her poor bed, which had but little covering left, whilst I was doing my best to complete her ironing. Her eyes were closed, and she breathed heavily, as though asleep; so that I was rather startled to hear her call me, 'Clem! Clem!' in a weak voice, that yet sounded eager too. I ran to her with the iron still in my hand. 'Put that down,' said she, looking at me with a strange stare; 'it don't matter now, my dear! Sit you here by me on the bed—I'll never iron no more, Clem! I an't long for this world, and I've seen such a deal of trouble in life, that I'd be glad to go, but for you. I would indeed,' she cried, looking up solemnly. 'I long to be "where the wicked cease from troublin', and the weary are at rest." There's little rest for the poor, seems to me, on this side the grave; but there's rest for them with God. Oh, my dear!'—she gave a great gasping sigh—'I'd die happy if I could but see th' master, and tell him what's in my mind about my boy. And I'd like him to say a prayer there—just where you sits—and close my eyes, as he did my old man's. Why is the dear master away?'

"My heart felt dead within me. I couldn't cry. I could do nothing but stroke and kiss her hands. I couldn't realise losing her. It seemed to me impossible that I should be left there all alone—a helpless orphan of fifteen. I tried to say a prayer for her; but my tongue was parched, and I could scarcely speak the words.

She did not heed it—she seemed all strange and wandering. 'I've such a longing for beef-tea,' she said presently, fixing her eye on me with a hungry, eager gaze that reminded me of a starving dog I had once seen; 'a cup of th' master's beef-tea would do me such good now!'—she laughed a wild laugh.—'And he'd give it me, if it was the last drop he had in the house—I know he would.'

"I looked in the cupboard. There was a stale quarter of a loaf, and just a pinch of tea in a blue paper; that was all. I made her a cup of the latter, and she sipped a little of it. 'Ah! it an't like beef-tea, my dear!' she said, with a long shuddering sigh. 'That'd set me up again, p'raps!' She took my hand, and kissed it. 'Clem, my boy! you've been a good son to me, and you'll always do what th' master says, I know? He'll be a friend to you when I'm gone.'

"I threw myself on the bed, and implored her not to talk so. I felt as if I should go mad. I felt I must endeavour to procure her some help, though I knew not how nor where. I got a poor widow whom she had been often good to (she was a kind soul, was mother!), to come and stay in our room, and finish the ironing. Then I ran out, half crazy. It was just Christmastime, and all the shops were full of provisions; everything that could tempt a poor starving boy. I ran till I had reached a better quarter of the town than ours; then I stopped to take breath. I was near a large butcher's shop, about which there was quite a crowd of people, buying meat in the cold dim afternoon. There scarcely seemed enough shopmen to attend to so many. I stood there, idly watching, as one after another walked away provided. There was beef in plenty—beef that might save mother's life.

"All at once, a woman standing near, who had been eagerly disputing with one of the shopmen about the price of a small piece of meat, threw it down and followed him to the other side of the counter. The meat fell on the pavement close by me. I stooped and picked it up. Then, quick as lightning, came the wrong thought—the irresistible temptation. 'Take it,' the Devil whispered, 'and save your mother.' I slipped it under my ragged coat, and trembling, shivering with excitement, slunk away unperceived. Sir, I give you my word I did not realise at that moment what I was doing. I was absorbed in the unexpected delight of having obtained beef-tea for mother! I walked slowly away, not daring to look behind me. Suddenly a sound caught my ear—a fearful sound—'Stop thief!' Could it—could it be me they were meaning? The doubt was enough! I flew like an arrow from a bow, knowing nothing, thinking nothing but to escape from that horrible detection, which all at once rose, and glared at me like a spectre. I, a thief! Madly I tore on; and as I turned the corner of a street, I looked back. Ah! there were people running—following me! I saw them in that glimpse. And louder and louder came the cry, 'Stop thief! stop thief!'

"My brain seemed on fire—my heart ready to

burst. Still I dashed on; till at last I came so violently against some obstacle, that I was hurled to the ground, and lay for an instant stunned. But I was up again immediately—up again, the blood streaming from my forehead, and on I flew, faster if possible than before. But that fall had given my pursuers an advantage; and now they were fast gaining upon me. Those I passed, too, turned to watch my headlong flight, and some swelled the train. I heard them pressing close at my heels, and felt it was indeed all up. By a sudden impulse, I hurled the meat away, and made one more convulsive effort—the effort of despair. It was the last. In another moment I was seized from behind, and bleeding, ghastly to look upon, found myself in the grasp of a couple of stout policemen.

"My cap was off—my face was covered with blood—I felt as though I should never get breath again, so violent had been my efforts—so great my previous weakness. But I did not faint. I kept my senses, as dragged, borne along between these two relentless giants, I was stared at, sworn at, followed by the butcher and his assistants, and a mob of the lowest description. And as we hurried past the corner of one street, I beheld a vision of a face I knew—a face pale, open-mouthed, horror-struck—that of a neighbour in our court. 'Mercy save us!' I heard her cry, 'if it an't Clem! Clem took for thieving! Clem! Oh! what ever 'll his poor mother do? *It'll be her death!*'"

"I had fearful paroxysms of despair during the night. The idea of self-destruction was continually present to me. Again and again I asked myself if it were really I that had done this thing—I, so honest hitherto? Yes, I *had* done it.

"Such offences as mine had become fearfully frequent in that time of scarcity, and the magistrates were forced to be severe for the sake of example. I went into court with a sullen, dogged countenance. I saw the crowd of staring faces, and heard strange words; but it was as though I neither saw nor heard, till one voice suddenly sounded in my ears; and then, indeed, I started as though I had been struck, and my whole soul was riveted in attention. *Philip Steele was giving evidence against me.*

"Phil Steele had seen me standing by the butcher's stall, watching the customers as they came and went. He had seen me take up the meat (he did not say from the ground), conceal it under my coat, and hurry away. He had instantly informed the shopmen of the theft, and had joined in their pursuit of me. All this he told in a clear ringing voice, and with a boyish simplicity of manner, that at once ensured belief. He was praised not only for the propriety with which he gave his evidence then, but for his prompt information of the theft at the time. But for the latter, I should have escaped unpunished, as no one but he had observed me take the meat, though many, besides the policemen, had seen me throw it away afterwards.

"This monster, whom my mother had won

back from the very gates of death, had watched and betrayed the widow's son! I fixed my eye upon him—a murderous, Cain-like eye—but I did not speak. I scorned to do so *there*. The time would come when I would both speak and act. For I would have revenge, even if I died for it.

"My heart was now harder than ever. I resisted all threats, I refused to answer all questions. I stood there mute, scowling, defiant, like a hunted animal brought to bay. They might do with me what they would. I no longer cared. But when suddenly I saw in the distance the pale face of my master—(oh! how changed!)—and saw the grieved expression of his pitying eyes, then all at once my strength gave way, my stubborn mood melted like snow before the fire. Stretching out my hands towards him, with an exceeding bitter and grievous cry, I shrieked out, 'Master! master! I *did* take it! But mother was starving! And, oh, I wish I had starved myself, before ever I did this thing!'

CHAPTER II.

"SIR, I went into prison an honest lad, honest at heart, in spite of the evil thing I had done. I came out of it a thief in intention and consent. I met with thieves there, men whose profession it was to steal, and I promised to become their pal. They told me of plenty of victuals to be had, and a joyous, exciting life; they told me that as an honest lad I was done for; that I might live for years and years, and refrain from dishonesty for ever, but sooner or later my 'trouble' would find me out, and drag me down again; they told me all this, and I believed and yielded to them. What chance had I otherwise?

"So when the time came, I slunk out of prison, meaning to betake myself to the place agreed upon with my new pals, and then try to find out something about mother. But, as though he had all along read my thoughts, the master was standing as it were in the breach; and when, ashamed and angry, I strove to avoid him, he seized and held me fast. 'No, Clem! you will come home with me—I must have you.' 'I can't, sir!' I answered, savagely; 'I'll never come to you again. It's no use—I won't.' 'You will!' he said, grasping me with a strong hand as I struggled to release myself, hating him almost for his interference. 'You will come, if only for your mother's sake.'

"He overruled me, as he always did. He had a strange power, that man!—not to be resisted. He made me go with him; but I was well determined to give him the slip, the very first opportunity. I would have nothing more to do with honesty, or him. It didn't pay to be honest; and it did pay, it appeared, to be a thief. He led me into his house, keeping hold of me with that strong earnest grasp of his, past his small parlour, up into an empty garret. Then he locked the door, took the key, and releasing me, sat down.

"'Clem,' he said, in low serious tones, 'you

have committed what in the eyes of men is an unpardonable fault; but God judgeth not as man judgeth. You can be honest yet, and you *shall* be honest. Yes, hear me out. You are one of my boys—my sons, as I consider them; and I am answerable for you. You shall *not* be turned from good. I know—I know all your grief—your struggles—your temptation, but I will help you through all. Trust in me. You shan't be dragged down to vice and infamy whilst I live.

"I was silent. I sat looking at him with tearless eyes—hard as iron. I steelled myself against him. I would not be his again.

"Look at that bed," he continued; "there your mother died—there I closed her eyes, and the last words she uttered were a prayer for you—that you might be kept from the evil—that she might meet you again, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

"Her very words!—Dead!—Mother!—Ah!"

"I had my face—"

"She never knew what—what you did. I thank God I was able to keep that worst grief from her. I brought her here not three hours after you were taken—after my own return home, that she might be safe from hearing it. Clem, she died full of peace—happy—blessing you—praying that you might keep honest, as she had done. And she left you this ring—"

"He took from his pocket mother's wedding-ring, and held it out to me.

"But before I give it to you, you shall promise me to be honest for her sake. Clem, perhaps she sees you now! Who knows?"

"It was no use trying to resist him. I was like wax in his hands. Before we quitted that garret, I told him all—all my piteous tale—the *way in which I did it*—scarcely knowing how myself—the despair afterwards—the indifference—the falling away and consent to a life of sin. And I had promised to give up all, and whatever the cost, to bear all, not for her sake alone, whom I should see no more on earth, but for his, who in her desolate bereavement had taken her to his own home and been unto her as a son.

"And into his own home he now took me too. He said it was the only way to shield me from the first bitter consequences of my own act. He said that when the others saw he trusted, he forgave me, they would learn in time to do the same, and no one would dare reproach or mock me in his presence. So I ate of his bread, and drank of his cup, sleeping in the little garret where my mother died, mourning for her with many tears; doing what I could, in my poor way, to serve the good man who had had compassion on me; loving him with an unspeakable affection; learning more and more every day of his wondrous excellence of heart and life. That was a period of peace and happy feeling, in spite of the many mortifications from which, do what he would, he could not shield me. I shrank with extreme sensitiveness from all contact with the outer world; dreading the sight of every familiar face; smart-

ing under the sneers I too often met with, and, worse still, the cold avoidance with which too many passed me by. Gladly would I have shut myself up within his sheltering walls; but this he would not suffer. I must be brave, he said, and meet manfully what I had brought on myself. I must live down evil recollections—overcome evil opinion. The first shock of the moral shower-bath was bad enough; but each moment made it easier to bear, and it was both heartful and bracing. So with his hand on my shoulder, he drew me, with what inward shame who can imagine, to the school, to face all those curious eyes—bear with the thousand slights that met me at every turn; to start and shiver under any chance allusion from childish lips to such deeds as mine had been; to suffer at every moment unheard-of pangs, yet keep a calm face. Ah! it was a sore trial, but he upheld me through all. His kind eye was ever on me; his voice had a peculiar gentleness when he addressed me; in a thousand ways he sought to show his boys that he trusted, loved, hoped in me yet. I knew not then, but I learned long afterwards, how he had prepared them all for my return, appealing to them, for his sake, to be forbearing towards an erring brother, who had bitterly repented of his sin.

"And at home the gentle lady vied with her husband in showing me confidence. I helped their solitary maid-servant all I could, thus preparing myself for a page's place when the master should find one for me. One day he was talking to a brother curate about me, and urging him to try and get me on. I was minding the baby, as they still called their sweet two years old boy—who had grown quite fond of me now, and would cry after me when I left the room.

"And you're not afraid to recommend him? You think you're wise to trust that boy?" Mr. Greathed said, glancing at me sideways with an expression of mingled doubt and surprise.

"I paused in my jumping of the little fellow, and listened breathless for the reply. I hated Mr. Greathed for his distrust.

"'Afraid!' my master cried, turning also, and meeting my eye with that frank, cheery glance of his. 'No, I haven't a particle of fear. And I don't think—I *know* I'm wise to trust him.'

"How I blessed him for his generous confidence in me! How with a great inward sob I said to myself that I would never, *never* betray it.

"I have said that he encouraged his boys to talk to him. In that way I now learnt much of his inner life and heart. Often, after a long day's labour, hard enough to knock up the strongest man, when I brought in his bottle of fresh water the last thing at night, he would push aside a half-finished lecture or sermon, turn to the fire, and say with a brisk kindly voice, 'Now, Clem, my boy! I've just half an hour for you. What have you got to say or to ask?' Once, as he tried to scrape together the remains of the nearly extinguished fire, I was struck with the unusual weariness of his look.

'You seem very tired, sir!' I said. 'I am tired,' he replied; 'leg weary, and brain weary. You see I'm not quite the man I was before I had that fever, Clem, my boy!'

"Why do you work so hard, sir? You wear yourself out.'

"Better that, than rusting out, surely.'

"But I don't see what you gr'in by it. It don't seem to make you any richer.'

"He smiled one of his own radiant smiles. 'No,' he cried, still trying to collect the scattered embers, 'not in one sense, certainly. I'm poor enough; so poor that I don't dare to use any more of those coals, for fear we should run short to-morrow. But we'll have a little warmth, nevertheless.' And going out briskly, he presently returned with a few pieces of an old hamper, with glass painted on it in large letters. 'That'll do!' he exclaimed, with quite a boyish pleasure, as after a while a bright flame sprang up, over which he spread his thin hands, shivering, but cheery as ever. 'That's capital! Now, Clem, you asked me why I worked so hard, when it don't seem to make me any richer. Tell me—why did you give up all thought of thieving lately?'

"I shuddered. Scarcely could I bear an allusion to that horror, even from him. I hung my head, and answered, 'Out of love to you, sir. And out of gratitude.'

"Exactly—to *your* master. And I work hard for the same reason—out of love and gratitude to mine. And my pay is—what no other master gives—not gold, better than that—'

"What then, sir?'

"Happiness! peace! hope! love! all those! *Real* riches.'

"Sir, you can no more imagine the expression of his face as he uttered those words, than I can describe it. When he spoke of his Master, he glanced upwards, as though seeing Him, and his countenance became rapt, solemn, full of adoration. I had beheld something of the same look in him before; when excited by the subject on which he was preaching, he carried all hearts with him, and drew tears from many eyes. But in a few minutes he was his own cheery self again, full of interest about me, whom he had in a manner forgotten before.

"Clem, I have a question to put to you.'

"Yes, sir.'

"Have you forgiven Phil?'

"I paused a moment before I replied. Then I said boldly, 'No, sir; and never shall.'

"I ought to mention, that he had often put this question to me before, and I had always returned the same answer.

"I thought you would do anything for my sake.'

"So I would—anything but that, sir. I shall never forgive Philip Steele. I have promised you to give up the revenge I once thought of, and that should be enough.'

"No, it is not enough. I must have the forgiveness too.'

"Sir, the other day you asked me the same question, and I nearly made a vow that I would never forgive Philip.'

"Clem, you tell me that—'

"I didn't make it, sir; but I *could* have done so. You see I don't wish to forgive him. He is base, ungrateful, cowardly. He returned my mother evil for good. I *never* will forgive him.'

"There was a pause. He sat looking at the fire in silence. 'Clem,' said he, after some time, 'I shall speak of this no more; at least, not now. Perhaps it was too soon to do so at all. But mark my words—we sitting watching that flame—you *must* forgive Phil.'

"As if to give additional effect to his words, the flame went suddenly out.

"I felt miserable. I believed in him implicitly; but I could not give up my resentment. It seemed to me unjust to ask it. It was my right. I clung to it. I cherished it. I *would* keep it, in spite of him.

"No more was said at that time; but some days later, as I was 'minding the baby,' he paused to watch us both, and said, 'It's pleasant, isn't it, Clem, to serve those one loves?'

"I looked up, all my heart in my eyes. 'It is indeed, sir.'

"But it is a better pleasure to serve those one hates; for then we must cease to hate them. No one can go on hating those they benefit; it is not in our human nature. So, if a man who harboured resentment against another for some great injury, were to ask me how he should set about getting rid of that resentment, I should say, "Do good to him, serve him, pray for him. You'll find you *have* forgiven him after that."

"He spoke with a great earnestness, a solemnity even, that impressed his words upon my mind. But they didn't convince me. 'Do good to Phil Steele! pray for him! I would die sooner. Rather, I would give the world to crush him, as he had crushed me.'

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER XVI. MR. ROMAINE GROWING
"STEADY."

In the Fermor household the furies of conjugal discord were tossing their torches violently. But they were genteel furies, and created no public disturbance, and a chilling and bitter politeness was their chief instrument.

Mrs. Fermor, in a sort of excitement, dressed herself the next afternoon for a little expedition. She felt a sort of flutter, as though it were an enterprise of great moment and anxiety. But she was determined to be free and independent, and to do something that would *commit* her to being free and independent. And in a little quiet brougham, that was sometimes hired for her, and glowing like a fresh pulled rose, she drove away to Mr. Romaine's "log-house."

She stepped out boldly, and gave a wistful look both up and down the street, in the hope that Captain Fermor might be passing by, to see her glove thrown down.

Such "a log-house" indeed; that is, accepting the richest stuffs, the most gorgeous arms, gold, silver, china, leopard skin rugs, and filigree lamps, as the rude materials with which log-houses are put together. Mr. Romaine came out and met her at the door like a sultan from his palace.

She looked in timorously, and shrank back. For the sultan had no one with him. "Afraid?" he said. "Quite right. I was prepared. With you I had asked all the polite conventionalities, but they have not come."

"It is not that," said Mrs. Fermor; "but you told me our friend Miss Manuel was to be here."

"Well, so I did; but I can see you won't come in."

Mrs. Fermor drew back again. "No, no," she said, "you could scarcely ask me. Married ladies don't pay visits to gentlemen in this way."

Mr. Romaine gave a loud and genuine laugh. "If all these caffans, and cloaks, and damascened blades had tongues, how noisily they would contradict you."

Mrs. Fermor looked at him with a little alarm, and turned to go.

His voice became soft of a sudden, and entreating. "What, no comfort to-day for the poor lonely outcast! No encouragement! If you were only to know how much better I feel since last night—how much *stronger* and better able to struggle—But what is this to you?"

"A great deal," said Mrs. Fermor, warmly; "it gives me more pleasure than anything I could hear. But you will go on, and do your best?"

"Why should I?" he said, gloomily. "No one cares to help me. Look here," he said; "read *that*. Just sent here, not ten minutes before you came. And I am expected to be steady and keep straight."

It was a sort of Lilliputian note, signed "Fanny Massinger," the name of the fair blonde girl. It said that she was coming that afternoon to see him, and talk over old times.

Mrs. Fermor was astounded.

"Now, you see," he said, "the way I live, and what I have to go through. The best way is not to affect anything quixotic, but to go on in the old road. So now, good-by, Mrs. Fermor. Let me see you down, and then to order tea for Mrs. Massinger."

Mrs. Fermor paused. She was a warm impulsive creature, and full of enthusiasm. She seemed to hear a secret call to her, to help, and protect this strange, struggling, even noble heart, who was so unfairly tried. Her cheek glowed as she turned and said:

"No, no; we must do what we can for you. I won't desert you. So come and show me your curiosities."

She was bewildered with the treasures that he exhibited; and he illustrated them so agreeably, with such a pleasant commentary, that an hour slipped away. No Mrs. Massinger came, however; for though Mr. Romaine had indeed received a note from her; he had written one in reply, pleading business for that evening, but fixing the same hour for the next day. How he talked, and almost bewailed the miserable state of his soul—a kind of wreck now—while Mrs. Fermor listened with a sort of devotion to the curious scraps and hints, patches of his life, which he allowed to escape him carelessly, as it were, and which had for her young soul an unavoidable interest—may be conceived.

"This is so good of you," he said; "so kind, so thoughtful. Is it profane or disrespectful to say that you have been my guardian angel? When I see you there before me, or rather when I *think* of your advice (is it not absurd almost, I that have rubbed through the world, the wise and experienced man, wanting advice!), I feel so strong. But of course I cannot hope for more? Still, for what is past, accept my most grateful thanks, Mrs. Fermor."

She, thinking herself a perfect little monument of wisdom, shook her finger at him. "It all depends," she said, "on how you behave."

Driving away at first, she was in a sort of elation; then fell into some little misgivings and troubles. Why had not Miss Manuel and the other lady come too? She thought of her then as of a dear friend, and indeed her heart had lately been turning to Pauline with almost a sort of affection and yearning. She was so splendid and brilliant, she admired her, and she was so kind and encouraging. She thought she would go and see her, and tell her her little troubles; then bade the coachman drive away to Alfred-place.

At the door of the house was standing a sober practical brougham; and a sober practical figure was letting himself out slowly, and shutting the door behind him leisurely, as though it were the leaf of a wardrobe. He went up the steps sharply, and rang the bell sharply, as who should say, "An hour contains sixty guineas, not sixty minutes."

Mrs. Fermor knew him to be a doctor. They told her at the door that Miss Manuel had been taken ill that morning, and was in a raging fever.

She had been so full of little schemes for confidence, for consultation, for kind sympathy towards this friend, whom she had determined to make a cherished intimate of, and love, and honour, that the news came on her like a blow. It roused up all the enthusiasm of her young heart. "I will go in," she said. "I will go up to her. O, this is dreadful! Where is the room?"

Half way up the stairs, she met a dark figure with black beard and gleaming eyes, who barred her passage. "I am sorry," he said, "we cannot see you. My sister is seriously ill. Another time."

"But," said she, almost piteously, "I am her friend. I want to see her. I am Mrs. Fermor, tell her."

He started forward; his eyes flashed. "You Mrs. Fermor!" he said. "Not a step, please! I must request you will go. She is ill now, and half unconscious: so I am master now. A pleasant surprise for her, indeed! You must go away, and go home, and I must beg you won't come here again."

Really frightened and overpowered, Mrs. Fermor hurried down stairs. The gleaming eyes, and a sort of restrained ferocity in his manner,

scared her. She went home full of grief and confusion. "She has no one to help her," she thought. "Only a woman like me could be her nurse. Noble, generous nature!" And Mrs. Fermor, full of enthusiasm and excitement, longed to be a sort of hospital nurse.

On the next evening, Mr. Romaine came stalking into the room. This visit she did not relish; at least, its boldness alarmed her. She tried to assume a little cold manner, but he was so earnest and eager that she put it aside at once.

"You have heard," he said, "about our friend Miss Manuel. It is dreadful, poor, poor girl."

"But is she better?" said Mrs. Fermor, wistfully.

"She is in danger," said he, "serious danger. She has worked herself into this fit, and of course all her fine friends will fly the house like a plague."

Mrs. Fermor clasped her hands fervently. "Indeed, I tried yesterday," she said, "to get to her. I feel for her. I hardly slept last night thinking of her. But there was a terrible man there, who turned me away."

"I know," said he; "that was her brother."

"I would give the world," she went on, "to get to see her, to watch over her, to sit up with her at nights, and be like a Sister of Charity to her."

"You would?" he said, with great interest. "Are you serious? There is a good deal of the theatre and poetry about 'watching' and vigils, &c., which is leading you astray."

A little wounded, Mrs. Fermor looked at him sadly, without speaking.

"No, no," he said, "I am only joking. That rough speech was not meant for you. I believe in you—a little. But if you are in earnest, come with me now!"

"Come with you," she said, wondering.

"Yes," he said, smiling, "I am a sort of gnome, or genii. I can unlock doors and get into houses by mysterious agency. Will you come? But no! prudery has its claims, even on an occasion like this. She is the Moloch of our day."

Mrs. Fermor's eyes sparkled. She seemed to feel a holy sort of call. The action of the Sister of Charity was before her eyes. "I will go," she said, "and I will trust you."

He got a cab, and she set off with Mr. Romaine. She was actually proud of her superiority to the conventional laws.

"I admire you," said Romaine, looking at her steadily, "for the way you have done this. I do indeed. No fuss, no confusion, but practical action. I begin to believe there is some good in the world after all."

She laughed. "You will learn in time," she said.

"Ay," he answered, gloomily, "but who will teach. You are tired of the scholar already. I saw that in your face when I came in. No

matter, I suppose I must go to the old school again. Another note this morning. Isn't it good? Here we are."

They went in, up-stairs into the drawing-room. A gentleman in black was waiting there, a tall and sorrowful-looking gentleman. Romaine nodded to him. "How d'ye do, Hanbury?" he said, and left the room.

Mrs. Fermor drooped her head a little guiltily. Hanbury looked at her sadly, and for a moment or two silently. "So you are Fermor's wife!" he said. She often thought afterwards of the sad, hopeless, and wistful look, with which he said these words. It was a little epitome of a whole history, that began with her own coming to Eastport.

Romaine came back in a few minutes. "I have seen Manuel," he said. "He has a good deal of the mule in him, but I have made him do what I like, as I do with most people," and he looked at her for a moment significantly. "Now," he continued, "you may come when you please, and stay as long as you please."

Mrs. Fermor's face glowed with a sense of grateful obligation for this service. This power of "doing," and compassing what seems difficult, is what excites the true reverence of women. The "almighty" man is *their* hero.

There was a soft and vital enthusiasm about her, even in little things, which was very interesting to others. She was full of quick, eager affections, and a kind of romance, and threw herself into the new duty she had chosen with an ardour and earnestness that was surprising. The brother received her gloomily, and with distrust. He was, indeed, something of a mule.

CHAPTER XVII. A NIGHT SCENE.

MISS MANUEL was tossing in the gripes of a sort of fever. "Over-excitement," said the doctor, a calm wooden man, who, with a steady attachment for the house, came twice in the day, and twice in the day let himself out of the one-horse wardrobe at the door. He was not a gloomy man, and used to stand for several minutes by Pauline's bedside, studying her flushed face and her eyes—brighter than ever they were before—with unrestrained approbation.

"Nothing *could* be better," he would say to Mrs. Fermor, watching him wistfully, and whose heart would leap at this joyful news; "nothing *could* be better. We shall have the worst symptoms by to-morrow. Pulse not yet high enough, blood abnormal, and a little wandering of the brain. I should say by to-morrow at the furthest. I should like an oppression of the chest, a difficulty of breathing; but," he added, with a sigh, as if illustrating the unreasonableness of our nature, "we can't expect *everything*. Still, nothing *could* be better."

And Mrs. Fermor, wondering, and mystified, and overwhelmed with deepest grief at this awful language, could only go through the usual farewell medical offices with anything but the delicacy which custom exacts. She often missed

her road to the doctor's secret palm, and the piece of gold described many noisy circles on the ground before it reached its home.

Pauline was really in danger for a few days. The doctor was right, though he put it in an odd way, when he wished for the crisis and the more dangerous symptoms to pass by. The excitement in which she had been living, the strain upon her life for so long, had begun to break her down, and she was now tossing and working in the hot fiery waters of fever.

Mrs. Fermor was a perfect Sister of Charity. She sat by her all day, and was really useful. But she longed to be able to show yet greater devotion. She would like to sit up with her all night long, a duty taken by a professional lady with a false curl at each side, like the volute of an Ionic capital. But the brother came pitilessly and roughly in the evening, and turned her away.

She spoke to Mr. Romaine. "I would give the world," she said, "if you could kindly manage it."

"What can I do?" he said. "I am only a rude rough being, without power of any sort. However, we will try." That evening he came with good news. "I have seen the mule," he said. "We had rather a struggle, but I managed him."

Again Mrs. Fermor was suffused with gratitude. She had the greatest confidence and a sort of trusting admiration for this all-powerful man. She was going home in a flurry of delight. It was raining, and he said carelessly, "How am I to get home?"

Still grateful, Mrs. Fermor said proudly, "You must come with me. I shall leave you at home."

He was a *true* friend, and she was almost a little proud to show to the world that in the instance of so true a friend, she could be above its vile conventionalities.

They had come out, and Mr. Romaine, after helping Mrs. Fermor in, had his own foot on the cab-step, when Fermor, with a sour angry face, came up. Romaine welcomed him with a cordial smile.

"Just putting Mrs. Fermor into a cab to send her home to you. You are just in time."

Suspiciously, and with a sort of sneer, Fermor answered,

"It seems so!"

"Ay, so it does!" said Romaine. "Why don't you offer me a seat, Mrs. Fermor?" He added, fixing his eye upon her, "Why, now? Come?"

He seemed to put this question purposely for some test of his own. Mrs. Fermor coloured a shade, hesitated, and then said with a little forced manner:

"Well, we *shall* ask you. You must not think of walking. Where shall we set you down?"

The test, whatever it was, was successful; for Mr. Romaine smiled triumphantly. He took off his hat.

"No," he said, "I should only crowd you. Good-by. Good-by, Fermor."

Fermor looked after him sourly. He disliked him, and his presence at *that* house; yet, of all the men whom he had ever known, this one alone seemed to intimidate him.

"I should only crowd you too," he said, with an ironical bow to Mrs. Fermor. "Don't let me interfere with your arrangements."

Mrs. Fermor was just saying, "But, Charles, Charles! I want to explain—" when he turned and walked away. She threw herself back, and bit her red lips. "Very well," she said. "Let him go! I wish I had told him openly that I had asked Mr. Romaine in. Why should I not? I am not a child, and if he treats me this way—"

She drove home and came again that night for her first vigil. She was in a tremor of excitement. A great business was before her. She had dressed herself for the task, and got lamps, books, fire, arm-chair, everything, ready with earnest preparation. By ten or eleven, she was sitting there alone—the attendant with the curl volutes had resigned wounded, not to say angry—a little faithful sentry, with bright wakeful eyes, in an arm-chair sentry-box. She was determined not to sleep on her post. Pauline was tossing there beside her. The crisis the medical visitor had wished for was at hand; but presently she became quiet and seemed to sleep. Joy and hope filled Mrs. Fermor's heart. Her trust and affection had increased with her attendance. She had never read the wicked Laurence Sterne, or she might have seen in his gay *Sentimental Travels* that "You take a withering twig and put it in the ground; and then you water it, because you have planted it." But Mr. Romaine had lent her a transcendental French romance, called "*L'Amour Spirituel*." (Alas! did she not occasionally lift her eyes ruefully, and strain them backwards to the days of "*Roger le Garçon*?" And this was so dreary and "spiritual" in its sense of the peculiar relations of those who loved each other all through its pages, that the long-lashed eyelids began to droop, and by one o'clock the sentry was sleeping soundly on her post.

She woke up suddenly, startled by the sound of some one talking. There was Pauline, sitting half up in her bed, her long rich hair down over her shoulders like a veil, her eyes flashing like glowing coals, and her arms beating back the curtains beside her. In terror, Mrs. Fermor half ran towards the door—then came back—thinking how late it was, and tried to soothe her. The glowing eyes fixed themselves suddenly on her. The fingers pointed at her, trembling.

"Send for her," said Pauline; "quick—send for her, and see, when she comes, keep her until I come down to her."

"Send for whom?" said Mrs. Fermor, soothing her. "For whom, darling? Lie down, do, dearest—there."

"Keep her!" said Pauline, struggling, "until I come down to her. I wish to settle with her—

with them all. But with her and her husband first."

A little terrified, again she tried to soothe her. "Do lie down," she said; "you must, indeed."

"I must tell you," said Pauline, confidentially. "*They* don't suspect—and she, the wife, actually thinks I have a sort of affection for her." And Pauline laughed.

Greatly alarmed, Mrs. Fermor let her go, and shrunk away. "But who do you mean?" she said.

"Fermor—the Fermors," she said, mournfully; "he who destroyed her—our Violet—put her to death with his own hands—took away her sweet life. Was it not a cruel and most dreadful murder? Was it not? And yet they hang people every day. But listen to me. I can tell you something. We are on their track—his and his wife's."

"But what harm has *she* done you?" said the other.

"Harm!" said Pauline, with a half shriek. "Who are you that ask me? Come closer. I can tell you," added Pauline, slowly and doubtfully, "there is something about *you* very like her! Ah!" she said, again beating the curtains, "she is not far off! Send her to me quick, or I shall get up and find her myself."

Dreadfully shocked and terrified, Mrs. Fermor ran to the bell and rang it. In a very short time the brother and some of the servants were in the room. But Mrs. Fermor did not watch again.

The doctor was right. The crisis had come and was past. Pauline began to recover. In three weeks, he said, rubbing his hands, "We are gaining strength, eh?" And certainly, accepting that community of expression, it must be said there was a sort of strength in which he had gained sensibly since the commencement of her illness. Later on, he said, "I don't see why we should not be kept up by the strongest beef-tea and generous port wine?" Later on still, he said, "I think we shall do—we are pretty sure to do;" and, accepting the community of the expression as before, it must be said that he had done very well indeed.

He had said, "We might be got down for an hour or two to the drawing-room, but mind, we mustn't over-do it;" and Pauline in consequence had come down, and was sitting in the drawing-room.

The doctor had come in person to superintend this critical juncture, and looked on with pride at her as she sat on the sofa. He seemed to hint that without this supervision fatal results would have taken place. "We got her down wonderfully," he said. "It was critical. And at one moment—on the lobby there—I had misgivings." The usual amber acknowledgment was introduced in the usual guilty way; but he whispered, "Not to *day*." No, no. This was a sort of gala or festival. There was a common link of sympathy running through us all, and why deny us the luxury of indulging our feelings.

CHAPTER XVIII. AN EXPEDITION.

WHEN Miss Manuel was recovered or convalescent, some letters which she asked for eagerly were brought to her. She picked out three with the Beaumaris postmark—three in the handwriting of Young Brett. She opened them eagerly. They were in the shape of a sort of journal, and full of details. The honest youth, not very fluent with his pen, had sat up many nights writing everything with a fulness that he thought would give pleasure. He had gone into the work with enthusiasm, and what follows is a short history of his adventures.

It was a very wintry journey down to Bangor. At Bangor he got on board a sail ferry-boat, and made a stormy passage across, with a "stiff" breeze, shipping seas every moment. "There is a long pier of wood," wrote Young Brett, "more like a plank than a pier, by Jove!" (even in writing he could not keep clear of his favourite god,) "and the wind was blowing so hard, and there was no rail to hold on by, and the sea was washing over your feet. I give you my honour, Miss Manuel, this thing was a quarter of a mile long. I never saw such fun! There was an old Welsh clergyman's hat that was caught by the wind, and went flying away like a bird. I could have laughed, only the poor old soul looked so distressed. And you would have laughed, Miss Manuel, to have seen us all tottering along that plank, some of us screaming, some of us laughing, and some of us stopping short altogether, and afraid to go back or forwards. There was a young woman, too, with children and baskets, and she was dreadfully embarrassed between the baskets and the children. Just as we were half way across, and close to the pier, I heard a scream in front, and I saw a little child in a red cloak fall half over the edge of the plank, and there was a wave coming, and the wind blowing," &c.

Young Brett went on to say that he caught hold of the child by the hand, as if he had just stooped down to lift up any child that had tumbled on the gravel in a square. But the truth was, he had jumped forward along the edge of the slippery "stage," shot past a man who was in front of him, and with much danger and thorough wetting, had caught hold of this little child. He raised her up, and carried her carefully and tenderly all the rest of the journey. The boat went "swirling" through the water, shipping a sea now and again, to his great delight; but he had the red-cloaked little girl on his knee all the time, and laughed for her, which she could understand, and talked English for her, which she could not, and finally set her down on dry land.

The young woman—a handsome, striking-looking young Welshwoman—was deeply grateful; not so much for the little service, for which she would have nodded her thanks to one of her own station, but for Young Brett's manner; which caused the feeling of every one he came in contact with to take some shape of affection, slight

or strong. It was so with the cabman who took him but two streets away; with the porter who carried his portmanteau from the train to the cab; to the people who got in at one station and got out in ten minutes. Every one felt that he was good, and this young Welshwoman had the same feeling.

Landing, he with great delight got into one of the light carriages drawn by a pair of donkeys, and drove away gaily to Beaumaris. "I really felt ashamed," he wrote, "to see myself drawn by the little creatures, but the boy who drove gave me their biography at length, and seemed quite fond of them. Besides, they were very strong, and we trundled along quite cheerfully. But I was thinking if Showers, or Slack, or any of our fellows had seen me! Luckily it was dark."

Most Welsh travellers have seen the little, old-fashioned dun-coloured "remote, unfriended," pocket town called Beaumaris, which we come to along the river, and which we see jutting out before us into the water, with a sort of sham air of a tiny fortified town, with a dull resemblance to a miniature Ostend. The little dun High-street, through which no carriages travel, and whose little dun houses seem toy-houses freshly taken out of a child's toy-box; the general air as if not only the streets were diligently swept up every morning like a hearth, but that also the toy-houses were swept down; and the quiet slumber that reigned over the men and women, and the windows, and the lone common at the edge of the sea, contributed to make rather a dispiriting impression on Young Brett as he entered triumphantly drawn by his donkeys.

It was all out of the season, it being the depth of winter. The little town seemed to be laid up in ordinary, stripped, unfurnished, like a ship out of commission. Young Brett drove to the hotel of the place, and was received with a little surprise. They were all out of gear. The rooms had a mouldy air; but he was made welcome.

To one of his temper these were dispiriting influences. But he manfully struggled against them, and thought of the friend whose mission he had come down to fulfil. Later, he was sitting at some dinner in the coffee-room, when a gentleman, rubbing his hands together softly, came gliding in. "God bless me!" said Young Brett, starting up; "Major Carter! What do you do here?"

"Well, of all the coincidences in the world, my young friend!" said the major, casting up his eyes devoutly. "Is it not? It looks like a providence, that we two, of all men in the world, and here, of all places in the world—"

"I don't understand it," said Young Brett, bluntly.

"Recollect," said the major, "this was my home for a long time. I had good reason, unhappily, to connect me with this place. I ought to remember it. You may be sure it is no pleasure to me to revisit it. And now let me ask

you, my young friend, what brings you down here, eh?"

Young Brett was as sharp and ready as he was straightforward. "Some business," he said, without hesitation. "Welsh business, major. Travelling makes one hungry, as you see."

"Welsh business?" said the major, slowly, and looking at him steadily. "For a friend, I suppose, not for yourself?"

"Common, every-day sort of thing," said Young Brett, helping himself. "A little confidential; you understand? Otherwise——"

"I dare say, now," said Major Carter, looking at him still, "where it was a lady who could not herself so conveniently travel; and who had a smart handy enthusiastic young boy she could send in her stead, to use his eyes and pry about, and pick up facts to try and slander and ruin a man who has never done *him* any harm, eh? *That's* an honourable and a gentlemanly duty to be employed on. Eh, Mr. Brett?"

Young Brett coloured. "I don't understand; that is, I *do* understand," he added, hastily. "But I think you assume——"

"Assume?" said the major, excitedly. "You can't say that. I am behind the scenes. I know most of what goes on. You are a brave, honourable, upright fellow, and I tell you I am grieved and ashamed to see you engaged in such a business."

Young Brett was in sore distress. His lips were sealed. "You make too much of this," he said. "I have private business which I am not at liberty to mention, and so——"

"As I say," continued the major, "you are a gentleman, and have always been above dirty work. Your friend, Miss Manuel, hates me, and you know why. Because I interfered to save a friend from a match that I considered was unsuited for him. He would have embittered the life of that poor girl. She would have been in her grave now; you know she would. The girl that he has married he is making wretched. And for this, Miss Manuel has marked me; I know it; she is determined to harass me in every way she can. I could not believe such vindictiveness in a Christian lady. I say it is shocking."

Young Brett's cheeks kindled. "Do you speak of Miss Manuel?" he said. "Those words, do *not* apply to her; to her least of any one in the world. I can't sit by, Major Carter, and have her so spoken of; I will not, indeed. She is above all that—miles above it. If ever," continued Young Brett, with a trembling voice, "there was a woman noble, and generous, and devoted on this earth, it is she!"

"I know she has a friend in you," answered the major, quickly, "and your defence of her is honourable to you. But tell me this, is it noble or generous to lead astray a young girl—a young wife—to put her in the power of a cold, scheming man of the world—~~hazd~~ *hand* her over to him—urge *him* on—all to punish the man who left her sister? Is this devoted or noble? I declare it seems to me devilish."

Greatly excited, Young Brett said, "If you mean this to apply to Miss Manuel, in her name I fling it back. I could not believe that you could dare to utter such horrible slanders. I deny them—I won't hear them, Major Carter, and—I must beg that this subject will not be pursued."

"With all my heart," said the other. "All I say is, watch for yourself when you go back. Take note of a Mr. Romaine and of Mrs. Fermor. Ask Miss Manuel herself. There."

"I shall!" Young Brett said, in great heat, "and within an hour after I arrive."

"Good," said the major. "I am content. We will say no more about it, as you desire it. Your warmth does you honour. Of course it is excusable in *her*: she loved her sister; but I implore of you reflect a moment before you go on. I have had troubles enough in my life, and want to end my days peaceably. Good God!" continued the major, walking up and down, "it is awful to think of. That any woman should venture on so terrible a track—and, my dear boy, I don't think you know the full force of what you are required to do."

Young Brett looked at him wondering, and still in distress. He had some qualms of conscience, and the picture of the old soldier buffetted wearily through life, and wishing to end his days in calm, affected him a little. He was almost on the point of speaking out candidly, and relieving the major's mind by telling him that all he had come down for was to hear something of "poor Mrs. Carter's" last illness, when he suddenly thought of Miss Manuel. She was so wise, so superior, so good, that anything she ordered and ordained must be right. He rose hastily. "My dear major, this is a regular nightmare of yours. Have a glass of sherry."

Carter's face changed. A few people, on a few occasions in his life, had seen a strange fiendish contraction spread over that face. It came on this occasion. He stooped over. "Besides," he said, "you don't think of the *danger* there is in this sort of game. You won't take a friend's advice. No? I am sure you won't. You would be led by a bright, flashing woman—just as all boys are led. Now take a friendly warning, don't run your head against a stone wall. There are people in this world, my dear boy, who, as the phrase runs, stick at nothing. They would crush, stamp on you, destroy you, to save themselves. You are a brave, good little fellow—rather foolish, though—and I should not like to see you in trouble. Take care, Master Brett, and, as a general rule through life, leave other people's business alone."

Young Brett laughed very good humouredly. Now that the major had dropped his character of the poor "buffeted" old officer, he was quite easy in his mind. "I am a stupid, foolish fellow," he said, "and they all tell me I want ballast. I am very young, you know, and shall mend, major. Are you staying in this house?"

Again the major's manner changed. He was the man of the world once more. "I have to go

up by the night train. Lucky fellow! You will have a comfortable bed here, and a comfortable sleep. A capital house. I know it of old. Think of the poor traveller tumbling on the cushions, as you turn round on your side to go off into a comfortable snooze. You are not angry with me? Advice from a man of the world, and from an old man of the world, is always useful. Good-by."

INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITORS.

THE unexpected success of the recent North London Working Men's Industrial Exhibition will, in all probability, prove to be an incentive to other similar enterprises. Indeed, the good services of many persons are already enlisted in the organisation of a *South London Exhibition*, planned for somewhere about the month of February next; and of another for Marylebone. Nearly all classes of society will wish them success. Their good wishes will go further; they will wish that such exhibitions were more fully associated than they are with the acknowledged tact and skill of working men. The recent exhibition at the Agricultural Hall was good enough to make us desire something better. A commencement has been made which, if artisans are true to themselves, may become gradually very important.

In one sense we may say that the soldiers began these exhibitions. Last winter, the men of the Twelfth Regiment of Foot got up, in their barracks at Dublin, a small exhibition of articles made or collected by themselves; and very well pleased were they and their visitors with it. Last March, "The South London Working Classes' Industrial Exhibition" was held in a very comical place—a swimming-bath. Last June, the troops encamped at Aldershot provided the materials for an exhibition which gave great delight to nearly all the men in the camp. And now, in the recent month of November, there has been held the exhibition at the Agricultural Hall, got up chiefly by the residents in Clerkenwell, Islington, St. Pancras, and the neighbouring parishes. The newspapers have told all that need be told concerning the building, the arrangements, the opening ceremony, the classifying of the articles exhibited, the prices of admission, the closing ceremonial, and the financial results; but we desire to offer some friendly suggestions to the promoters of any future exhibitions of similar character, and to the working men who may contribute to them.

First, it may be well to draw the attention of workmen to the fact that they might make such an exhibition more valuable without any increase of trouble, cost, or time to themselves, by each man doing his best with *the trade which he understands best*. It was impossible to walk through the avenues between the rows of counters and stalls on which the exhibited articles were placed at the Agricultural Hall, without recognising a certain amount of oddity in them. Men produced articles precisely of a kind which

we should have expected them *not* to produce. Blacking and furniture polish, by a postman; cases of stuffed birds, by a Rotherhithe boat-builder; a leather-work picture-frame, by a letter-sorter; an oil-colour Death of Rufus, by another letter-sorter; pieces of Berlin-work, by a letter-stamper; a saucepan to strain off broth and keep off the fat, by a bootmaker; a button-hole cutting-machine, by a chemist's porter; a model of a life-boat, by a paper-hanger; a chain of sixty-three links, all cut from a solid piece of wood with a penknife, bradawl, and tin saw, by a varnish maker; a banjo, by a hammerman; a model of Thomas Moore's cottage, by a ware-houseman; crayon drawings, by a hide splitter; stuffed weasel and hawk, by a hairdresser; an arm-chair made of bits of firewood, by a railway navvy; a railway signal, by a tooth-brush maker; a written pedigree of William of Wykeham, by an operative chemist; a bead model of the Great Eastern, by a shoemaker; a design for a Shakespeare monument, by a bell-founder; a model of Tickner's cottage, by Tickner the leather-cutter (whether the cottage already possessed by Tickner, or the cottage which Tickner wishes he may get, we are not told); a doll's house, bedroom, furniture and all, by a copper-plate printer; models of cabs and carriages, one of them consisting of fifteen hundred little bits of different woods, by a dyer; a pen-and-ink Raffaele's Madonna, by a labourer; a cardboard model of a new congregational church, by a female domestic servant; several models of castles and monasteries, by a costermonger; water-colour paintings on glass, by an umbrella minder at the British Museum; a red waistcoat, with three or four hundred white buttons, by a barometer maker; a motley-coloured meerscham pipe, by a solicitor's clerk; a patchwork picture of Daniel in the Lions' Den, by a tailor; poetical and literary compositions, by an advertising agent, a glass painter, a letter-carrier, a compositor, a watch jeweller, a clerk, and a book-binder; a needlework bed rug, by a bandsman of the Seventy-third Foot; a counterpane and pincushion, by a bandsman of the Fifth Fusiliers; a table-cover made of more than six thousand little pieces of cloth, by a Coldstream Guardsman. Of all these exhibited articles some were new and useful, some new but not useful, some useful but not new, some neither new nor useful, some mentally clever, some mechanically clever; but all were alike in standing apart from the customary trades or avocations of the producers. The managing committee noticed this peculiarity in many of the articles sent in. They explained and justified it in the following terms: "An artisan seldom chooses as a recreation that branch of industry in which his daily occupation consists. If actively or laboriously employed during the day, drawing, painting, or model-making is generally practised to occupy his leisure hours; while he who follows a sedentary occupation almost invariably resorts to some more active method of utilising his spare time." This is true, and it would be unreasonable to pin a working man down too closely in his

choice; but it is equally true that men can produce better things in their own than in other trades. The nearer a man's productions illustrate the art in which he is most skilled, the higher in excellence they are likely to be. It may be odd, curious, or pleasant to see John doing that which Thomas can do better, and John is himself certainly proud of the achievement; but if Industrial Exhibitions are to have any permanent value, it will be better, on the whole, that both John and Thomas should each stick to his last, whatever that may be. The brush-maker who sent some shaving-brushes and three drawings very likely felt more pleasure in the latter than in the former, and his friends looked with much interest at the specimens of his artistic ambition; but his shaving-brushes were, of course, better than his drawings. Therefore, without discouraging what may be called ingenious relaxation, we still say to workmen exhibitors—think of the shaving-brushes; although you need not altogether neglect the fine arts.

Another suggestion refers to historical series to illustrate particular trades. At the recent display in the Agricultural Hall, a plumber sent in what was described simply as "specimens illustrating the development of the craft, from the fourteenth century to the present time." This conveys exactly our meaning. Of course plumbing in the middle ages would refer chiefly to leaden window lights for churches and cathedrals, leaden roofs and gutters for similar buildings, and perhaps a few leaden vessels which would now be made of some other metal; leaden pipes were but little used for the conveyance of water in those days. This idea is susceptible of development in many interesting ways. Specimens illustrating the operations and products of particular trades at successive periods, would possess a real historical interest; because they would in some instances show what kind of materials were in familiar use at particular times, in others how the shape and colour had been modified by changes in fashion, in others how far technical ingenuity had gone, and in others how far the people had been able to afford this or that long ago. Say boots and shoes. Mr. Planché and Mr. Fairholt have told us, by woodcuts and descriptions, what kind of boots and shoes were worn in England in past ages; but it would be much more interesting to see the things themselves. Would this be practicable? We do not know; it is one of those things which cannot be determined until tried. Articles really made many ages ago are becoming very valuable, for collectors bid high for them; but there might be obtainable specimens here and there. Hats—from the peaked and the cavalier down to the broad brim and the narrow brim—how curiously would a working hatter look at such a series, and how much it would interest persons who were only hat wearers! A chronologically arranged set of old locks and keys to contrast with the polished products of Chubb and Bramah; the buttons that buttoned up our

forefathers before the days of Florentine and pressed horn; the buckles that came in no one knows how long ago, and nearly went out with George the Third; umbrellas, patiens, tinder-boxes, andirons and fire-dogs, knives and forks, pins and needles—there is no end of familiar articles which, if treated as a *series*, would illustrate some one department of trade or other. Or it might be the tools used by a particular class of artificers, showing how much more perfect they now are than in bygone days. It would be almost too much to expect that elaborate machines would be exhibited side by side with the rough hand-worked tools which they were designed to supersede. But though unlikely, it would not be impossible. If manufacturers would lend specimens of good machines expressly for this purpose of comparison, and not merely to display their own skill as manufacturers (and we believe there are many of them quite liberal enough for this, if a well-digested plan were submitted to them), a capital beginning would be made; for workmen could supply abundance of hand-worked tools of our present day, and collections of old tools might be picked up here and there. Or, as another manifestation of this comparative view, the historical series might exhibit the materials mainly employed at particular times, rather than the finished articles themselves, or the tools employed in the manufacture. There was a time when cotton was almost unknown amongst us, wool being the king of fibres; there was a time when velvet was too costly for any but the wealthy, as there were no velvet weavers in England; there was a time when "nothing like leather" had a real manufacturing significance, before india-rubber and gutta serena were known to us; there was a time when paper contained neither cotton, straw, nor Spanish grass; there was a time before the days of shoddy, of jute, of Bessemer steel, of hot blast iron, of electro-silver, of aluminium, of photolithography, of guano colours, of coal-tar colours, of papier-mâché, of carton-pierre. If those times could be compared with each other, and with the present, by a series of specimens in any particular trade illustrating the materials worked upon, the tools and apparatus for working, and the finished articles themselves, we believe that no place would be better fitted for them than a Working Men's Industrial Exhibition.

A third suggestion:—manufacturing processes displayed in actual working. This is a never-failing source of interest to visitors. We all remember how constant was the throng of lookers-on at the International Exhibition of 'sixty-two, busily following the dexterous manipulations of the velvet weaver, the tobacco-pipe maker, the lead-pencil maker, the chromolithographic printer, the machine seamstress, the medal stampers, and other handicraftsmen (and women). There is something decisive and convincing about seeing a thing done before our very eyes; it is better than any book, to matter-of-fact people; it conveys an idea more clear than any diagram or

woodcut; we see the man, the materials, and the tools, and what he does to the second through the medium of the third. And if the makers are permitted to sell as well as to make in the building, all the more pleasant to the visitors. A man would enjoy his pipe better if he could tell his friends that he had seen that self-same pipe made; and his wife would look with additional interest on her quilling if she has actually seen it quilled by the very ingenious machine contrived for that purpose. There was an excellent attempt at this sort of thing in the recent North London Industrial Exhibition. A person connected with the Luton straw-plait trade had a stall in which the manipulations of that craft were well illustrated. And not only the manipulations, but the materials also; inasmuch that the sum total was nearly equivalent to the Natural History of a Straw Bonnet. There was a little of the soil in which Bedfordshire wheat is mostly grown; there were some grains of different kinds of wheat; there were some good stalks of corn, ear and straw included; there were the straws after the ears had been thrashed out; there was the inner tube after the outer sheath had been removed; there were straws dyed in different colours; there were straws split up into two, four, or more strips each, and a woman at work to show how this is done with the aid of a very simple little apparatus; there was a girl at work, busily plaiting the split straws into the narrow ribbons or plaits of which straw head-gear is made; and lastly, there were the finished hats and bonnets, with and without the decorative appendages that belong to the milliner's art. All this was very good; so good, that we would advise an extension of the same system in any future Industrial Exhibition. Let managers and exhibitors lay their heads together, and decide how it may best be done. A silk hat could not, perhaps, be managed, for there is much stove-drying and heated liquids required; but there might be pegged and screwed boots and shoes made before one's eyes. Stocking weaving, by hand and rotary machines; lace-making and tambouring; needle-making; hook-and-eye making; confectionery making; penny ice making (not a bad speculation if the season for the exhibition happened to be in hot weather); cigar making; bookbinding; pottery making; electro-plating—in these and a hundred other manufacturing trades, whatever could be done to bring the workers and the working, the materials and the tools, directly under the notice of the visitors, would indisputably be attractive. Of course there would be preliminary difficulties to encounter; but difficulties are—things made to be conquered.

A fourth suggestion:—moving power. Many kinds of apparatus cannot be effectively shown at work unless some continuous rotary power be provided: to turn a winch-handle would often suffice; but a man gets tired, and his time is worth so much an hour; whereas a steam-engine knows no fatigue, and dines simply on coal. Steam-engines are not always large affairs. For

an exhibition in a swimming-bath, a steam-engine in a band-box might be large enough. And they really are now to be met with very small indeed: right little, tight little, compact, sturdy, go-ahead, never-say-die machines, which, if not possessed of one-horse power, would at any rate command one-hpny power. It is not unreasonable to believe that there are makers who would gladly lend such a steam-engine as a recommendation in the way of business; and then the managers would only have to provide some fuel and a stoker or engineer. All the exhibited machines and apparatus that require the aid of moving power, might be grouped around the little steam-engine, like satellites round a luminary. Or, if not a steam-engine, we believe that Manchester could say something about a recently-invented hydraulic machine, by which rotary motion is produced in a simple and inexpensive way. At all events, once let the idea be accepted, and there are brains sharp enough to find out how to manage it. At Hyde Park, in eighteen hundred and fifty-one, and at Brompton eleven years afterwards, there was steam-power on a mighty scale, moving some of the most stupendous machines ever seen in our metropolis; transpose mighty into tiny, and a working man's exhibition might do the same thing in a degree sufficient for illustrating the action and worth of many an ingenious piece of apparatus. If coal is dear and cash is short, the engine might be kept working during certain busy hours only, when Simmonds and his wife and children are most likely to come and have a look at the place; for Simmonds is a hard-working fellow, and can't afford to come in the forenoon.

The arrangement in the building is another matter on which a hint may, perhaps, not be superfluous. Both at the South London and the North London displays the distribution was too much in the style which a tidy housewife would call "higgledy-piggledy." There was not sufficient grouping. Birds of a feather did not flock together. Tin saucepans were too near watch movements; cork models were too near early risers' friends, which would "wake you at a given hour, strike an alarm, ignite a match, light a lamp, illuminate a clock-face, and make a cup of coffee, while you are dressing;" and patchwork quilts were too near to smoke-jacks and dripping-pans.

Make whatever classification you think best. At South London there were seven classes: Useful, Ingenious, Ornamental, Scientific, Artistic, Curious, and Amusing. At North London there were eight: Professional Workmanship, Amateur Productions, Inventions and Novel Contrivances, Mechanical Models, Architectural and Ornamental Models, Artistic Objects, Ladies' Work, and Miscellaneous Articles. No one has a right to speak very authoritatively on this subject of the best mode of classification, for the subject is confessedly a difficult one; but whatever be the number and designation of the classes, the arrangement of the articles in the building ought,

as much as possible, to be in conformity therewith. It is something to know where to find what we want, even in an exhibition for which only twopence is charged for admission.

Our half-dozen suggestions will be completed by one relating to the catalogue. Let the ordering of the articles in the catalogue correspond with the classification adopted. This was done at the petite exhibition at the Lambeth Baths last March; but it was neglected in the larger display at the Agricultural Hall, and the visitors were much puzzled in consequence. A model of a steam-engine was catalogued next to a lady's work-box; a crochet bed-quilt next to a model of a yacht; a sewing-machine next to a carved ivory vase—no one could tell at what page to look for a particular class of exhibited articles. Classifying into groups, arranging on the stalls according to the groups, and tabulating in the catalogue according to the arranging—this should be the golden rule, to be departed from as little as possible.

PAULINE.

Art! happy time! Ah! happy time!
The days of myth and dream;
When years ring out their merry chime,
And hope and gladness gleam.

Then, how we drink the storied page,
In boyhood's dreamy home,
The marvels of the wondrous age,
Of old Imperial Rome.

The Naiad haunts our native rill,
The Oread seeks the tree,
And fancy weaves on rock and hill
Her shadowy witchery.

I read once, on an antique leaf,
A legendary dream;
A tale of former love and grief,
Fit for a minstrel's theme.

Home, from the Julian wars, he came.
A chieftain stern and bold;
Time tried, but conquer'd not, his frame,
Grey-hair'd, and yet not old.

He trod one day the mystic halls,
The Cæsar's stately shrine,
Where the Gods reign'd along the walls
Calm, marble, and divine.

He, of the billowy beard, was there,
God of the bold and brave;
And she, the lady, heavenly fair,
The daughter of the wave.

Hers, the rich brow, blind Homer sung,
That men must love and die:
The helter, lowing o'er her young,
Had not so soft an eye.

He gazed, and while entranc'd he stood,
His signet-ring he drew,
And bound it, where the pulsing blood
Should thrill a finger true.

Then said he, with a man's strong vow,
My beautiful, my blest,
None other maid, no bride but thou
Shall thine beneath my breast.

That night he lay, a lonely man
Along his desolate bed,
When lo! around a radiance ran,
By her, his lady, shed.

He rose; his love disdain'd control:
He rush'd with rapture rude.
He did surround her with his soul,
And loosen all his blood.

In vain! A marble form he held,
To love and bliss unknown,
The grasp of that bright besom chill'd
His heart to kindred stone!

No passion thunder'd in her veins,
Her lips no lightning shed;
Calm, as the snow on northern plains,
Or like the lovely dead.

Cold was her kiss; and icy cold
The touch of every limb;
Though fair the form his arms enfold,
She was no bride to him!

He lived not long. The vision came
And mock'd him night by night,
Till his heart wither'd, like his fame;
He died, a nameless knight.

Did fancy weave this shadowy tale
In some forgotten scene?
Or was it wrought in this lone vale,
And thou that bride—Pauline?

I know not; but I know that stone
Will mould as fair a form.
With eyes as soft, to love unknown,
And veins no vows can warm.

And I have touch'd a prophet-lyre.
He perish'd;—so shall I.
He burnt with unavailing fire,
And I shall yearn and die!

MY QUEER PASSENGER.

I AM sitting alone in a very retired place—latitude $22\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ south, longitude about 46° east (for without a chronometer we can't be certain). If the reader glances at a good map of Queensland, he will find that two wide mountain ranges, and more than four hundred miles, separate me from the great Pacific, which is the nearest salt water. I was despatched hither by government to regulate the "runs" of the squatters in this wild place, and I hurried up by long stages, leaving my drag and staff far behind, so here I am amid boundless plains, and boundless forests. My staff has come to grief; all my horses have been knocked up two hundred miles away; one, a most valuable draught horse, is dead. Two months more of strictest isolation must be my lot (one month of it I have already endured), and the question is, how to get through that period? Shall it be by penning fiction, or by jotting down memoirs of the near and remote past? Perhaps to do both is the better plan, and leave it to the reader to discriminate which is which.

I must premise that my present locality does not afford desirable facilities for writing

connected compositions. Within sight are the fires of numerous "black fellows," who, a few days ago, murdered two whites, one a shepherd, the other a wayfarer. During the same few days I have been cognisant of *five* audacious robberies close at hand; and, although like Mr. Micawber I can affix "magistrate" to my name, I was as harmless to the lucky robbers as an unborn innocent, owing to the want of a posse comitatus, and consequently of the means of conveying the bushrangers into the pale of civilisation.

Moreover, festoons of playful but ugly-looking snakes, swaying over one's head from the bark roof of the "humpy;" vivacious and edacious rats, that have a provoking fondness for nibbling at the eyebrows and toes; the pertinacious bow-wows of the owl; and the satanical howls of the native dog (we are among the antipodes, you know); all these blended into one do not guarantee that entire composure of mind suited to the recollection of many minor details. Here I begin, however; let the reader fancy me at sea, bound for Victoria.

Well, yes, sir (it is the chief officer who is speaking), I *have* known some queer passengers, and it is not two years since I sailed with the queerest of all. I was then second mate of an Indianman bound for Bengal, and my queer passenger took a liking for me, which he showed in many a way. He was a tall dark man about forty-five, and was just beginning to turn grey. His face was deeply lined, but I could not help thinking it was from sorrow more than from evil. Gentleman shone most brightly through his mien and bearing; and yet, unless when spoken to, he hardly ever opened his mouth to either lady or gentleman during the many weeks he was on board. There were some nice people, too, that trip; an eminent general with his daughter; a missionary, his wife and sister; three light dragoon officers, one with a Victoria cross upon his breast which he had won by a deed of heroic daring, though a more delicate-looking youth it would be hard to find.

We had been but a short time at sea, when the queer passenger seemed to have selected me as companion. Every night he stayed on deck during my watch, and it was not long before I fancied that his mind was not all right; an opinion which I found was shared by his fellow-passengers, but on grounds different from mine. To them his extreme taciturnity, his avoidance of all amusement, his abstraction of manner, his abstaining even from reading, was the theme of marvel. To me, his increasing singularity of speech, his sudden starts when pacing the deck at night, his half-uttered moans when he and I were gazing into the phosphoric waves, were all proof.

One night—it was about six bells—we were leaning over the poop-rail, talking. On a sudden, he said, excitedly: "Now, does not that seem like a human face?"

"What, sir?" I replied.

"Good Heavens! *there* it is," he said, point-

ing to a dolphin, which, radiant with phosphorus, was swimming about three fathoms beneath the surface. I told him what it was, but he muttred, as though not convinced; and, after a minute or two, added, "You have many things to learn, but you are not prepared for this lesson."

He then, walked rapidly up and down, muttering much; and frequently looking over the vessel's side intently into the water. I felt very sorry, for I was convinced that his madness was becoming worse, and would soon lead to something sad. I kept by his side as much as possible every night afterwards, to prevent mishap, and although I did so as unostentatiously as I could, I found he perceived my design. He laid his hand on my shoulder one night.

"Walter," said he, "I see it all, and have seen it for some time. You will do no discredit to the family you belong to."

"Family, sir?" said I, in great surprise. "You cannot know—"

"Yes, Rickman, I *do* know. Your uncle Edward was the dearest friend of my boyhood. I suspected who you were, from the likeness, and by cross-examinations, whose drift you did not perceive, I penetrated your secret. Hence it was that I took to you so much."

The old ivy-clad home of my childhood, the love-glowing face of my dear uncle Ned, the sweet serene face of my mother, the twining gold tresses of my two baby sisters—all these rushed before me with magic swiftness, and the tears filled my eyes. He went on:

"You have thought me mad; you knew that others thought it too; and yet you never, I am convinced, uttered your suspicions to any one, and this because you fancied I was somewhat kind to you. In this you have acted well, Walter." Another pause. "But I am not mad. I would I were! Oh, how different is mine from the wish of the great satirist who prayed to God ever that his reason should be saved! Madness were forgetfulness, and to me would be the greatest blessing—next to death, Walter, next to death!"

It would be impossible to describe the appalling intensity of feeling which the deep sepulchral tones of his voice evinced. I ventured to stammer forth:

"Surely, sir, there must be something worth living for."

"Good night," he said, shaking hands. "You have discretion, and to you I will confide something which ought to be known to a few when I am no more." He then went below.

We were long becalmed in the tropics; but at length we got a "slope" of the trade-winds, and went along famously. Our queer passenger had not for weeks spoken to me, save by short fits and starts; and I began to think he regretted having said as much as he *had* said. Accordingly, through a feeling of delicacy, I kept aloof from him, pretending that I was busy when he came up during my watch.

At last he addressed me in a very abrupt manner:

"Rickman, I am about to relate to you my dismal story. Swear by your God that you will never disclose it in my lifetime!"

I said I never would; but he, hardly waiting for my reply, added: "It will be but a brief time of reticence."

I could only interpret these words in a sinister way, and, much moved, I conjured him to throw himself on the Almighty with all his sorrow, and to abstain from any act of rashness. "I know, sir," I said, "I am not fit to advise one of your age and learning; but I have already lived to see strangely unexpected deliverances from misery and misfortune."

He did not seem to hear me, but, leaning gloomily on the rail, he thus began:

"I was forty years old when I married her. A severe disappointment which I experienced in early life had changed me much. To most persons I seemed cold-hearted and repulsive; but I thought she knew me better. Her father was a clergyman of small means, and she had four brothers, all in the army. By accident I met her. Our courtship was very short. Her father was happy to see his last child provided for, and our wedding was celebrated with great pomp. Two of her brothers were there; the other two were serving in India. I took her to our secluded Irish house in the county Clare, and, for a year and more, I lived a life of happiness such as falls to the lot of few.

"She was of wonderful beauty. Tall, of exquisitely moulded shape, with flashing eyes of brilliant blackness. She was much given to melancholy, which greatly increased after the first year of our union. I then began to fancy that the memory of some old affection haunted her; but she often told me that I was the only man she had ever loved, and that my well-known learning and accomplishments (those were her words) had long caused her to entertain for me the greatest respect, even before she had seen me.

"Several times I came upon her unexpectedly, and found her in tears, with an open letter in her hand. On my entreating her to let me know the cause of her unhappiness, she pleaded nervousness, the thought of her father's delicate health, and other family matters, which she assured me, I could not enter into. I troubled myself much about this. I thought that my manner towards her was not demonstrative enough, and indeed no manner could show the boundless depth of my love for her; then I thought that the disparity of our years precluded a perfect interchange of feeling and sentiment. But any suspicion of her guilt, any thought that she was not stainless—"

Mr. Aspern stopped abruptly, wiped the perspiration from his brow, and proceeded:

"Oh! Why did I not die then! I should have carried in my soul to the realms of Hereafter a glorious dream. But now—"

"We had been married fifteen months, when most unexpected news came to me from India. A distant relative had died there, leaving me a large fortune, and my presence was required in

Bengal to arrange important affairs. Finding that your ship was soon about to sail, I resolved to take passage in her, and I settled all things needful for my wife's comfort during my absence, which was to be for a twelvemonth. Her despondency deepened, and I strove to flatter myself that my approaching departure was the cause.

"I had had a lovely garden laid out for her. A side-walk led down to a tasteful bridge of ornamented wood, which spanned a pretty stream: an insignificant stream in dry weather, but a dangerous torrent after rain. In time of flood, the water rushed down with great velocity, and, to prevent the 'bursting' of the bridge, several of the flooring-boards were not nailed down. This bridge led into a park, just beyond which were the stables, and the stables commanded a view of our garden. Although there was thus a short cut to the stables from the house, none of the servants were allowed to avail themselves of it; our usual evening stroll was the garden and the park, and those were strictly private.

"For some days the rain had been falling heavily, and our walks were stopped. I was much occupied, however, by business in the neighbouring town, and did not return as early as usual for several days in succession.

"I returned one dark rainy evening just before sunset. Much rain had fallen, and, as I crossed the bridge on foot, I noticed the stream flowing turbid and whirling beneath. This was not my usual way of going home, but, in consequence of the rain, I rode straight to the stables, gave my horse to the groom, and took the short cut. There was a shady summer-house in the upper corner of the garden, and I observed, to my surprise, a man's footprints along the path leading thither from the bridge. The prints were those of a fashionably-made boot; and my surprise was increased by coming to a spot in which they seemed to have been met by another person's prints, and thence *both* led to the summer-house. Whose foot but *hers* could have made those tiny impressions? I reached the summer-house, and there I found my wife.

"'Good Heavens! Caroline,' I exclaimed; 'you out on such an evening—you so delicate?' She was shivering with cold. 'Who was here?' I said.

"She shivered still more, and replied timidly, 'No stranger has been here, Reginald.'

"'What?' said I; 'no one up the walk from the bridge?'

"She looked frightened, again shuddered, and, gazing with her large eyes in my face, she repeated, 'No stranger has been here.'

"I looked at her earnestly; her eyes drooped; she was ghastly pale.

"'Well, my dearest,' I said, 'let me muffle you well; you are very imprudent in so exposing yourself to the damp air.'

"I wrapped her large shawl around her; from one of its folds there fell on the ground a glove. It dropped from behind, and she did not see it. I picked it up and concealed it. It was

a lavender kid glove, that had been worn by a man.

"I will not speak much of my feelings that night. Hundreds of trivial things came rushing and crowding into my memory—all of them, each of them, confirmation that the worst was true of her.

"Her dejection, her frequent weeping over the letters, were now accounted for. Had she not often and often withdrawn from me in the evenings, and stayed long away, returning with overladen excuses? Had I not seen her, more than once of late, drop a letter into the receiving-box of the post-office, when she might have put it in my mail-bag at the house? Had I not seen her nervously starting at the slightest noise, when seated in the twilight at the window in her little sitting-room which overlooked the garden?

"She walked into the house before me, and I had time to collect myself. I pleaded headache, and retired into my library. She knew that I never could bear the presence of any one when ill, and I was safe from interruption. Amid the whirling dance of my maddening thoughts, no idea of revenge on *her* had any place. I don't believe in the commonly received opinion that real love can be changed into hate. I could not hate her. I even thought with pity of the outer sorrow that could not fail to be hers in this world for evermore.

"But *him*—*he* escape me! No. How best to proceed? 'Shall I go and question my groom, who must from the stables have sometimes witnessed their stolen interviews?' No, my instincts revolted at the idea of talking to a groom about her, fallen angel though she was. I would do it all myself. My plans were soon formed. Early next morning I rode to our little town, and sent back, by my servant, a note to my wife, stating that I was compelled to start for London that moment, to make some arrangements about my voyage, and that I should be absent at least a week. I then went to the city of D—, purchased a light-coloured wig, a large pair of green spectacles, and, disguised with these and a large beard and moustache, returned to our village, where I engaged apartments opposite the post-office. There I remained on the watch.

"Three days after my supposed departure, my wife's carriage drove up to the shop kept by the postmaster. Previous to her entering the shop, I saw her drop a note into the letter-box. After a few minutes' delay in making purchases, she drove off again.

"Late in the afternoon, a tall distinguished-looking man, with a travelling-cap, its peak closely drawn down over his face, entered the shop. I felt this to be my enemy. I saw him receive a letter from the postmaster's wife, and hastily walk away. I hurried to the shop, and, in broken English, asked if there were letters for Herr von Thirl? She replied in the negative, but I earnestly requested her to look over all the letters. This was in order to gain time for a question or two.

"I inquired who was that fine-looking man who had just gone out of the shop? She didn't know; he was a stranger. But was not his name on his letters? Oh yes; the name was Mr. Thornton, but he didn't live in the village. Had he been long in the habit of coming for letters? Not very long.

"I walked forth in the direction of my home. It was nearly dusk when I came within sight of that spot where my bliss in life had been. Over the wet spongy fields, over crumbling fences, through swollen water-courses, I had come, but danger and fatigue were unfelt. About half a mile from the house, I saw a horse tied up to a fence. He was with her, then.

"I hid myself close to the bridge for a while, until darkness should conceal my movements. I then hurried across and approached the summer-house noiselessly. They were not there. No. Of course they were in the house, then. I was not long left in indecision as to my next step. The window of her sitting-room (it was a French window) opened, and there they stood within a few yards of me, his arm thrown round her waist. I heard him, I saw him kiss her; I heard her kiss him; I heard his impassioned 'Good-by,' and then, with the noiseless step of fate, I hastened by a near cut to the bridge.

"I crossed it, shoved the ends of three planks off their supports, so that the slightest weight should tilt them over, and waited about ten yards off, with a heart whose throbs I heard above the roaring of the angry flood.

"He came. He made a few steps along the bridge. Then, a wild cry, a dashing of wood together, a plunge in the torrent, an interval of silence; another cry, 'Help, help!' That was all. I was avenged. No mortal could escape out of that rock-banked stream in its then state.

"Next morning I sent a note to my wife. 'Caroline,' I said, 'I was close to you when you and he parted last night. I saw everything. He shall come to you no more. God forgive you.'

"I left at once, I joined your ship, and I know I shall never land alive. Don't misunderstand me. I shall not commit suicide. But his face—that face which I never saw in life—is with me ever. And, so closely is the memory of her entwined with my being, his face bears a likeness to hers; but, unlike hers, it always wears a ghastly frown. Lately, it has worn a more menacing expression. All will soon be over."

And it was soon over (continued the chief officer); for, one evening at sundown, a man fell overboard. The ship was going free at the time, and there was a stiff breeze. As the man passed the quarter, or rather as the quarter passed him, it was plain that he could not swim, and his look of horror as he rose on a wave would have gone through you. Mr. Aspern was standing beside me on the poop-deck. He snatched up a life-buoy and leaped overboard. A boat was lowered, but it took too long a time; the ship was brought-to. There were only two oars in

the boat, though four men had jumped into her; and we saw that they hardly made any way in the direction of the floating men, around whose heads the cormorants were sweeping, their terrible bills often coming very near them.

Darkness soon came on. We burned lights for the boat, which, at last, returned, but without Mr. Aspern and without the sailor. There was no doubt they had gone down. This, sir, was the end of our Queer Passenger.

Our ship reached Victoria in safety, and I lost no time in going up the country to see some gold-fields that had recently been discovered. I was fortunate enough to procure a black "boy" to lead my pack-horses, and I set out with a couple of seven-inch revolvers, a good rifle, four good horses, two of them laden with a tolerable "swag." I travelled about fifty miles a day for four days, camping out each night, and at last came to a good-sized public-house where I determined to stay for a few days to give a spell to my horses. I was lonely enough during my stay, until a gentleman came who was a treasure as a companion. He was much my senior, and seemed to have a thorough knowledge of the world. I had never met a more fascinating man. I was delighted that we were to travel together.

We *did* travel together, and well it was for another that we did so. On the second day we came to a creek, where I proposed that we should stop and lunch. I had scarcely spoken, when a horseman passed us at a rapid pace. He wore a red Garibaldi shirt, and a helmet hat with a red silk "puggaree" streaming behind it. He had hardly disappeared over the steep bank on the opposite side of the creek when two shots were heard, followed by a shout. We spurred our horses over the creek, and, in a few seconds, beheld the person who had passed us, overthrown, his leg pinned to the ground by his horse which had fallen, and a man in a mask about a dozen yards off, taking aim at him with a revolver. We dashed on, but my confounded horse came down with me, his foot having landed in a bandicoot's hole. I staggered to my feet much shaken, and was in time to see the issue. The red horseman and the bushranger fired simultaneously, and the robber swerved in his saddle, but he came very close to the other and extended his revolver again. The other's fate had been sealed but for the promptness and skill of my companion. He took a long shot, the robber's pistol fell to the ground, his right arm dropped at his side, and, uttering a howl of rage and pain, he galloped off towards the scrub.

When we reached the fallen man, and had released him, he said gaily, "Well, by Jove! that *was* touch and go! Your shot saved my life, sir, and a better shot with a revolver I never saw."

"Who could your assailant have been?" said my companion.

"Oh, one of Micky's gang, of course. They have become very troublesome lately, and don't scruple to take life. I am certain I hit the scoundrel, but, *by Jove!* sir, you have given him

a stinger. He has killed my horse though, poor brute, and I wouldn't have taken two hundred for him this morning. Gentlemen, my tent is not far from this, and there's plenty of room."

We made him mount one of our spare horses, and we soon came to his tent: a capital tent of galvanised iron.

"Now then, Bob, look sharp about dinner." Bob looked sharp, and we were soon seated at a table, on which we saw kangaroo—"steamer," bronze-winged pigeons, a couple of wild ducks, and preserved potatoes. Nor were welcome liquids wanting. There were sparkling hock, sherry, and pale brandy."

After dinner we lighted our pipes (he and I), and he became very communicative.

"I came out without twenty pounds," he said, "and no one *could* believe how lucky I have been. I 'dropped' on large nuggets; I got advances from the banks, and purchased large quantities of gold for two-pound-ten an ounce, for which I received three-pound-sixteen. I bought bits of swampy ground in a place that was reserved for a township, and soon afterwards got as many pounds for them as I had given pence. If riches could give happiness, I ought to be one of the happiest young fellows in the Australias."

He said this with a deep sigh, and smoked meditatively. My travelling companion was very silent the whole evening. He took little wine, and listened to our host with great attention. A fine young fellow our host was; a man every inch of him. He had evidently been reared as a gentleman, and bush-life had not made him forget his early habits.

"Have you ever been in Ireland?" he inquired, after a pause in our conversation.

"Often," I said, "on visits."

"In what counties particularly?"

"Many counties. The last I visited in, was Clare."

"Indeed! I don't know many families in that county. Did you ever meet a Mrs. Aspern?"

"I met her but a short time ago."

"How—how was she? Does she still live at Bellgrove House?"

"She does. She is a very lovely woman, but in most delicate health. She never goes out save to spend a quiet evening with her intimate friends the Crossleys, who are friends of mine. It was there that I met her. They say she pined away from the time of her husband's departure, and was brought to death's door by the intelligence of his decease. They say, indeed, that, although much younger than her husband, she loved him most passionately. He was well worthy of her love. A genuine, a noble fellow. He lost his life on his way to India in trying to save a poor seaman from drowning."

"He was the noblest of men," said our host; "although I never knew him personally, but only through others."

As he said it he seemed much agitated, and took a glass of wine, and a second, and a third.

"Poor Caroline, poor Caroline!" he said, in a low voice; then suddenly looking up, "I have been a sad scamp, and a disgrace to my family; but sooner or later the truth will be known. She was my favourite sister. I was the youngest child, and was spoiled. I entered the army, went to India, took to gambling, took to drink, and at last proceedings were taken against me for forgery. I was wholly innocent, but a brother-officer informed me privately that there was no chance of my acquittal; so I made my escape, he furnishing me with the means. I went home under a feigned name, and I saw my father, who would not receive me, saying that every mail from India contained shocking accounts of my depravity, which had broken my sister's heart and his. I went to my sister Caroline, saw her in private often, but never could prevail upon her to mention my case to her husband. He was too honourable a man, she said, to advocate the cause of an outlaw, and he would, she was sure, deliver his own brother up to what he believed to be merited punishment. She sold her own private jewellery to enable me to leave the kingdom, and we parted with great tenderness, for she did not believe me guilty. But on that dismal evening she told me she felt a presentiment of evil, and she was nearly right, for, on my crossing a foot-bridge that led from the garden, part of the planking gave way, and I was plunged into a perfect torrent. Although a good swimmer, I must have perished but for one of the planks that had fallen with me. I drifted away, clinging to this, and was landed, much bruised, a mile down the river. I reached London, and wrote to her before I sailed, telling her of my escape. I received a reply the day before sailing, which much distressed me. 'James,' she wrote, 'you have brought a great grief upon me. I think and hope I am going to the grave.'"

But at that moment my travelling companion raised his head, looked wildly at us, and cried in a solemn voice:

"Most merciful Heaven! O, most merciful Heaven!"

He strove to rise from the table, and could not, but fell back helpless on the rude couch.

"Apoplexy!" I exclaimed; "undo his neck-cloth."

"No," he faintly murmured; "look at this, James Mowbray."

With trembling hands he pulled out a miniature from his bosom, and held it out to our host.

"My sister Carry!" cried the latter.

"It is the picture of my wife, James Mowbray. I am Reginald Aspern."

He and the seaman had been picked up by a whaler, and forwarded by the first passing vessel. I did not diminish the happiness of our host by informing him that the brother-officer in question had met with an accident in "pig-sticking," and had before his death confessed that he had committed the forgeries attributed to Mowbray. This news had just arrived in Europe as I was leaving.

I commenced my story, "I am sitting alone

in a very retired place," &c., but since the above incidents occurred, I have visited "home," as we properly call it, and the very happiest days I ever spent in my life were spent at Bellgrove House, in the County Clare. And the very greatest romplings I ever had, were with three young chubby rogues and one little girl, the three former bearing respectively the names of Reginald, James, and that of your humble servant; the latter that of Carry. . . .

"I HAVE DONE MY DUTY."

WELL! and a very good thing to have done, my dear madam; and you may be reasonably proud of your feat, and glad that you have so much scored to the good in your Great Account. Reasonably proud, I say; not unreasonably; not thinking that you have built the whole pyramid of human virtue from base to apex, and with all the secret chambers and treasure-stores complete, and not believing that you have sucked the orange of morality clean and dry—keeping only the gold-coloured skin as a tent and trophy.

Duty is a grand thing to do, and the duty-doer is an indispensable person in his generation; and yet more than mere duty is needed for the perfectioning of our lives; that is, if we would add the richness of grace to the hard square base of fact. All square bases need ornament. We want painters and sculptors as well as paviors and house-builders; and though stout blue serge is an admirable institution, and keeps one well clad against the winter cold, yet do you not think that a wardrobe of stout blue serge only, coarse and serviceable, would be a little heavy and uninteresting? For my part, being a frivolously minded person, I own to a weakness for laces and ribbons, and a rich black velvet now and then, and a dash of shining silk, or a cloud of airy muslin, with trifles of chains and locketts and flying ends and dangling streamers and pretty silly charms, worthless for clothing but good for beauty and that so much of coquetry as shows the desire of pleasing; without which we are less lovely than the savages. I own that a life of duty only, without the sweet caresses and loving words and other tender resting-places built up by Love on the dusty road of human travel, is to me a life without delight, a day without sunshine, an orchard without singing-birds, a dress of coarse blue serge only, good against the hard inclemency of winter, but unpleasant in the wear and unlovely to the wearer.

No one doubts, still less denies, the importance of doing one's duty. But there is duty and duty; and one has not built the whole of the pyramid, when one has put three bricks in a row, with a broken flower-pot on the top. There is a duty, for instance, which is like a dry white withered bit of junk whereby no one can live fitly or generously; I mean that manifestation of duty which is done, not so grudgingly as ostentatiously—not so complainingly as coldly—not so slackly as ungraciously; this is

the duty-doing for which no one can feel warmly grateful, and which can never be lovingly repaid with compound interest stored up in the golden granaries of the heart, as one repays grace and generous goodness. The debt of duty paid to the uttermost fraction with the rigid exactitude of cold justice, is a hard and bitter gift, paralysing the hand that gives and blistering the hand that receives it; and among the worst of the self-delusions that blind and bewilder us, is the boast of having done our duty to the poor starved soul hungering for the genial warmth of love.

"I have done my duty." Just so; and you have done no more. You have given workhouse fare for the marriage-feast and the mother's milk—for bread you have cast at his feet a stone, and a serpent for a fish; for love you have doled out duty; for sacrifice a carefully adjusted balance; a painted fire for the bright yule log; and weeds for wayside flowers. This has been your theory of life; and you have carried it out, not relenting, and never relaxing. But if to this cold duty, on which you plume yourself so much, you had added a little warmth of love? if, instead of your serene self-satisfaction, you had more largely measured others' needs, and less generously your own bestowings? if their rights, and not your gifts had been uppermost in your mind? and if salt junk, dry, white, and withered, and coarse blue serge, stout and serviceable, had not seemed to you all that man could rationally require? and, if all that, dear madam, then you would not have rubbed those lean white hands of yours over each other with quite so much unction as at present; you would not have set your lips so square and tight, nor have said in such monotonous and inflexible accents, when I pleaded for his weaknesses and a tender handling of his frailties: "I have done my duty by him, and I can do no more." (As if we have ever done our full duty to any one, or at any time!) You would rather have remembered those gentle words touching our brother's need, which mean more than your version of doing one's duty, and instead of a seat bespoke between the cherubim, would have said something about the lowest place and unprofitable service, which would have been more to the purpose perhaps.

I know of no condition in life, and of no work—not even the drill-work of a barrack-yard, or the machine-work of a factory—in which doing one's duty only, without a dash of something more spontaneous and heartsome superadded, is enough for a man's conscience. For, be it remembered, duty, in the narrow sense in which I am using the word now, does not include the free grace of love, or sunny excursions into pleasant by-paths anywhere; it is simply Duty—that which the law imposes, and that which society enjoins; but as unlike the free grace of love as Judaism is unlike Christianity. Take a sheaf of examples, selected at random. We do our duty in a most undoubted manner when we blow up our servants for their short-comings, and give what nurses call "their whips" to our

children when naughty and disobedient: quite our duty: unless we would be ridden over roughshod by the one, and assist in the inevitable ruin of the other. But is there nothing beyond and beside this duty, necessary as it is? is there no praise to be bestowed for small well-doings? no indulgences outside the contract? no kindly thoughts for the good and happiness of the one? and are the others always to go un-kissed to bed, with a virtuous denial of sweetmeats? Indulgences, praises, kisses, and "goodies," do not come into the category of our duties; nevertheless, the kitchen and the nursery that are without them are only half alive, and not half nourished. But Susan's holidays, and Betty's new gown given her in acknowledgment of the more than salaried service she bestowed on our dear boy in his illness, and Jane's young man allowed his supper on Sunday nights because she has been faithful and loving, and diligent in her calling—though duties according to the higher law of love, scarcely come under that head according to the lower creed. So with our children. Kisses and fondlings, and pretty stories told by the evening firelight, and Christmas-trees according to our means, and jaunts among the daisies and buttercups in summer-time, and the thousand-and-one gratuities of love, which are quite apart from duties—are they not as needful for the health and vigour of those young lives as "their whips" duly administered in evil times, and severe remonstrance when the traditional black dog has crept inside the nursery door? I think so; but you, my dear madam—of whom your son once said he had never remembered your lips on his since he was a child of ten, and sick unto death—you would count all these things follies, dissipating the sterner atmosphere, and leading to spiritual waste and poverty.

We do our duty when we look sharply after the relations between our butler and the port bin; but is it no part of the same duty to remark on the brightness of his plate, or to thank him for his attention to old Rusty-fusty, our maternal uncle, during his visit to us of formidable dimensions, and in a state of mind which it would be flattery to call unendurable?

The small grocer round the corner, where that good old Jones deals as much for charity and neighbourly good feeling as for convenience, often sends in packages of suspicious levity, even with string and paper thrown in. And the string is always large and the paper very thick. Jones does his duty, and so does Mrs. Jones, when they remonstrate with the peccant grocer, pointing out the error of his ways, and striving to imprint on his heart the truth that a certain nameless pavement belonging nowhere is not made of good intentions, but of light weights and heavy papers, of the sand-box just to the side of the sugar-tin, of sloe-leaves curled upon heated plates and mixed in with Congou and Bohea, of sprats masquerading in oil as sardines out of the Mediterranean, of sealing-wax for cayenne pepper, of copper pennies boiled among the pickles and greengages

jam, and of hams, soaked in creosote, sworn to have been hanging in the reek of the Yorkshire chimneys a month longer than was absolutely necessary. They have done their duty to the small grocer then, adding a threat to leave him if he persists in his nefarious practices; also they have done their duty when they pay his bill regularly at Christmas, or, it may be, once a week, deducting their per-centage for ready cash as their duty to themselves. But I think there is something more required than even all this, good and right as it is. So did the Joneses. When the grocer's miserable little wife fell ill—"Wife, ma'am!" said Jones's cook, a portly spinster with an account at the savings-bank; "I don't call her a wife, ma'am; I call her a slave!"—and Jones's cook was about right: well, when she fell ill, it was not quite the popular notion of a customer's duty to the tradesman supplying him with short weight, for Jones to send the poor little wife a bottle of wine; and for Mrs. Jones to furbish up an odd frock or two for the children, adding a tucker or a shoulder-knot for a little bit of grace thrown in. The duty would have stopped short at the weekly payments and the careful remonstrance; it would not have gone into wine and pleasant fneries; for duty does not wander abroad, though love and charity may—at least, not that kind of duty which people pride themselves on when they feed their world on cold porridge, and give neither milk nor butter, neither sugar nor honey, as softener or sweetener.

A wife does her duty to her husband, and keeps herself above blame, if she is faithful and passably domestic. And a husband does his duty to his wife when he makes her a sufficient allowance, and lets her be mistress in her own house, not interposing his masterhood too rudely, when he cares for her comforts and fit and, if you will, elegant maintenance. That is his duty to her; and I am sorry to add a duty which every husband does not think it binding on him to perform. But is there nothing more due from either of them? Is there no generous forbearance with mutual failings? not in that aggravating way of, "It is my duty to bear, and so I bear it; and do pray come and see what a sweet holy martyr I am, and how beautifully I am bearing it;" not in a hymn of one's own composing, sung with crisped lips and averted eyes, but in the only way worth having, with the generosity of love, with the forbearing of true charity and patience. The wives and husbands living together according to the law of duty only, and not according to the law of love—the heart that is moulded only to this form—the lips that breathe no other prayer—the soul that knows no other aspiration—the lives established on this platform and no other—what a cold, dry, miserable set! They are mere mummies.

I knew a wife of this stamp, and I dare say many others knew her too. She has done her duty, certainly, in her chilly life, and done it very thoroughly, as duty. She has kept her husband's money carefully, and has spent it

judiciously, always in the most telling manner and with the best political result: she has laid herself out with the skill of a general conquering an unwilling country, cultivating only the richer part of her acquaintance and those in whose hands, or by whose connexions, lay the worth of good fat fees, while systematically closing the door against those who were only ailing and affectionate, and not remunerative; and she has never wanted an excuse for so closing the door, even against the meekest face! She has publicly professed just so much more than the ordinary amount of piety as puts her in accord with the fanatics, yet keeps her tolerable to the careless—a nicely calculated amount, doing her infinite credit to have hit; she has married some of her daughters to her mind, and is actively canvassing for the remainder, for which purpose her house is plentifully supplied with young men of good expectations, but as hermetically sealed as was ever Eleusis to the uninitiated to such as have their fortunes still to seek; in all which she has done her duty, and the world has no fault to find. But in the true interior of that marriage—in the secret sanctuary of that house—how does she stand? As a mask, a sham, a simulacrum, hollow from the inside and the mere effigy of a woman on the outward, as a dead, dry, make-believe of living flesh, if true widowhood means anything beyond judicious housekeeping, if a man's real mate should be more than his steward, and a mother's functions go beyond nursery surveillance and successful match-making.

She has done her duty. So be it. Rigorously and exactly she has meted out her measure of allowance, and never once has she let it flow over into the gracious excess of love, never once has she flashed out into the generous fire of sacrifice. Let her reward be the same. For her duty let her have justice, and strike the balance for the rest. A miserable balance for a sin-laden one-sided mortality, that which is made between duty and justice, with neither love nor mercy to trim the scales! She has done her duty, she says again, and why should the world complain? though to do the world justice it shows very little inclination to complain: only the hungry hearts of her household may sometimes cry out in the pain of loving need, asking for a home, not only for a lodging value so much a quarter. But to her all this is mere wasteful fancy-work, of which neither curtains nor wedding-cloaks can be made; just so much loss of time, she says grimly, thinking that Providence would have done well to have made of roses aerial potatoes, and of nightingales fit victims for the spit of value in proportion to their song. That would have matched her ideas of duty; at present such excesses go on the side of love, and love is a waste of power, she says. Poor thing! how she has missed the great arc of strength.

Many people do their duty, for which no one can give thanks beyond the payment stipulated for from the beginning. A doctor does his duty when he goes to see his patients daily, leaving

them awful draughts and pills as big as acorns to get down the best way they can. And yet there is an attendance which is not put into the bill, but which is the very core of the visit, all the rest being husk and rind; there is a thoughtfulness beyond professional skill, and a human kindness more than medical care, which no one pays for, because no one can pay for it, yet which is that grace beyond duty that vitalises the whole. The doctor who does not, or who cannot, give this, gives only half his skill and never makes his way; and he who can naturally and without affectation give most of it, is he who gets to the "top of the tree," while his humbler brethren are making whistles out of the lower branches.

So with the clergyman. His duty, indeed, is but the driest of dry bones unless warmed up by human love and charity, and then it becomes the dearest and most refreshing of all that the needy can receive. So with other professions, saving perhaps the lawyer, who, if he does his duty—no more neither less—does all that can be asked of him, his profession being mathematical and to be spoilt by exuberances.

But as a rule duty is the mere outside of everything, the form and the appearance not touching the inner core. Thus, it is our duty to go to church, but if we do not say our prayers and do ogle our neighbours, we may have done our duty but assuredly we have done no good. It is our duty to nurse the sick, but if we give them their potions punctually and shake up their pillows deftly, yet drop bitter words into their anodynes at the same time, is doing our duty there of much real value to them or to ourselves? Go through the whole round of human circumstance and it is ever the same: duty the letter that killeth, and love the spirit that giveth life; duty the husk and rind, and love the core and the heart; duty an algebraic quantity, not x , and love the unfathomable depths of a genius which creates, and of a passion which inspires.

CLEMENT CAREW.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III.

"WELL, sir, one day my master told me he had got me a situation. I was engaged to wait on the steward's room at the Earl of Normanbury's.

"Now, Clem," said he, with his honest eyes looking full into mine, "you have your future before you. With some boys I might feel a doubt whether I had done right in saying nothing of the—the past to this steward; with you I have none. I know that you will keep your promise to me."

"I will, sir."

"I know that you will live down the evil that has attached to your name, and make yourself a new and upright character."

"God bless you, sir, for trusting me. I will."

"I went to my place, and found it a hard one. The ladies and gentlemen of the steward's room were difficult to please. I have waited on many

real ones since, and found them considerably less so. But the set at Normanbury Park was a tip-top set, as Mr. Latchup the steward took care to inform me the very first day. 'Everything in my apartments is most helegant,' said he; 'I see to that myself. We have things first-rate, ~~we~~ we have; and of course are waited on accor ding. His lordship ain't half as particklar how he's served, as I am for my ladies and gentlemen.' And this was true. I found, too, that the steward's boy was expected to do pretty nearly the whole work of the establishment, and to 'do it willing.' 'None of yer hidle airs here!' the second footman said to me one day, when I remonstrated against doing some special work of his. 'Who are *you*, pray, to talk to me about trouble? Why, a whipper-snapper like you has no call to know the meannin' of the word.'

"I had no proper name in that house. I was, 'Buttons,' 'Lout,' 'Young- Shaver,' 'Whipper-snapper,' 'Butter-fingers,' 'You Booby,' 'Lazybones,' 'Now, Stoopid,' 'Great Gawk,' and a dozen other such flattering appellations. I was boxed, cuffed, sworn at, ridiculed, abused. My eyes were apostrophised in a manner far from complimentary. My awkwardness and vulgarity were a theme for continual comment. I had work and kicks in plenty, but no love. It was undeniably a hard place.

"Mr. Latchup was a great man in every sense of the word; more than six feet high, and large in proportion. He had a grand manner, used grand language, and walked the floors grandly. They trembled under him, as did I. Nature seemed to me to have made a mistake in his case, and whilst he ought to have been the Earl of Normanbury, that nobleman, a little bald-headed personage, who sneaked about the house as though he was afraid to meet his own servants, should have been the steward. I saw many strange things there, which opened my mind not a little. I saw the contrast between the luxurious table of a great man's steward's room, and the meagre fare of a poor curate, though the latter was a gentleman born and bred. I saw the waste, the airs, and extravagance of this pampered part of society, who eat, and don't pay. I saw the jealousies, the heart-burnings, the contentions, the love-making, that went on in those luxurious lower regions; and I saw a great deal more that I won't even allude to here. For, although I was 'Stoopid' and a 'Booby!' I had eyes, and used them.

"In course of time, by dint of cuffs and hard names on the part of those ladies and gentlemen, and hard trying on mine, I had learnt my business pretty thoroughly, and they were good enough to keep me tolerably well up to it. Mr. Latchup sometimes condescended to say I was not a bad sort of young feller, take me altogether, though deuced low. But that was my calamity. It was not every one as was born with elevated idears, nor how could it be expected of the lower orders? Of course not.

"But in sixteen months there came a thunder-clap. The butcher in B— whose meat I had

stolen, had married a sister of Mr. Latchup; and, as ill luck would have it, Lord Normanbury being absent, the bride and bridegroom thought proper to take her brother in their way home after their wedding trip, and were, of course, luxuriously entertained in the steward's private apartments. The instant I beheld Mr. Lardner's face, I knew my fate. His look of horrified surprise was more than enough for me.

"How shall I describe the commotion that ensued? Every servant flew to examine his or her possessions; every drawer was turned inside out. Luckily for me, nothing was missed. The very scullery-maid couldn't say but what her things was right enough—and what a mussy, 'sure; when they might have been all pick-pocketed and murdered in their beds, and never known nothing about it.

"That afternoon I was summoned to Mr. Latchup's private apartments, who, looming vast and tremendous, thus addressed me:

"Well, this here's a pretty go, this is. Now look here, and listen to me, young shaver. I don't deny but what you've behaved respectable on the whole whilst here, setting aside your vulgar ways, which you can't help, for you're born so; the lower orders air. But the ladies and gentlemen, d'ye see? as frequents these apartments ain't accustomed to the society of thieves, nor yet of the swell mob, d'ye see? and of course they couldn't think of putting up with it. 'And stealing a beggarly piece of soup meat! Yah!—so low. Consequently, I regret to communicate that you must go. Immediate. But you'll be treated handsome—that's my principle with the lower classes. Your month's wages and board wages. But don't you think for to come upon me for a recommendation, because I can't give none. The responsibility would be too trementious.'

"I had worked hard—struggled hard—borne much in that house, all in the hope of redeeming my character, and keeping my promise to my dear master. I sneaked out of it like a convicted thief (*as I was*), with swollen eyes, a bursting heart, and a character blasted. Yet I was to forgive Philip!

"I never thought of a dishonest life now—that time was past. I would go to my master, and lay my sorrow before him.

"Alas! sorrow had been there before me. His little child had died some months previously of scarlet fever, and he himself was dying now of rapid decline, the consequence of a cold caught one bitter night in attending a sick parishioner. His sweet wife came down, and told me these tidings with a pale sad face, but without a tear. She had wept so much, she said, over that little grave, she seemed to have no tears left. The doctor had ordered him to see no one for long together, but when he heard I was there, nothing would satisfy him but that I must come in at once. Ah! how changed—how wan—how wasted was the dear face. But it had its old cheery smile yet, its bright kindly expression. Nothing would change those, I thought, but death.

"And I had not been long with him before he had comforted me so, that for the time, at least, I almost forgot my grief.

"Clem,' said he, when he had listened to my tale with breathless interest, 'it is hard, it is hard. But it is all right, nevertheless, as you'll know some day. You have fought a good fight, and been beaten down this time. Up again, my boy, and fight bravely on. Up again; you'll win at last.'

"I haven't the heart, sir. I can't fight no more.'

"You can.'

"No I can't, sir. It's what they said in that—that place. My trouble'll stick to me like pitch—always hunt me down. If I get clear of it for a bit, it'll find me out again wherever I am. And I shall end in *that place* at last.'

"He almost sprang up on his sofa. 'No, no! a hundred times no!' he cried, his eyes dilating with eager excitement. 'You'll live it down, my boy, you'll live it down! Believe me. I say you will.'

"He sank back exhausted. But presently, raising himself again slightly, he whispered: 'And I see good in it, even now!'

"Good, sir?"

"Yes; great good—for you can nurse me. I want you sadly, and my wife wants you. We have often wished you were here of late—we wished it when my little son was ill. Don't cry, Clem, my boy. Rather rejoice that you are sent here just in time to be of use to us.'

"This was how he comforted me, sir, and made me forget my grief.

"I nursed him—ah! I am thankful to think, as tenderly as he had nursed my parents—and made it easier for that sweet lady too. She often said I seemed to have been sent to be a help to her, and she did not know how she should have got on without me.

"By degrees I discovered how poor they were—how many things she longed to get for him, that were quite beyond their means. When I learnt that, I took a five-pound bank-note from my little hoard (I was rich, for I had spent but little at Lord Normanbury's, and had received a month's wages and board wages in advance on leaving), and enclosed it to her, with 'From a true friend,' in a feigned hand in the cover. I was present when she opened it. 'See!' said she, 'what Providence sends us! How can I ever be thankful enough?—For I think,' the poor thing added, pausing suddenly, as though a doubt crossed her mind, 'I think I'm justified in using it! It says 'From a true friend,'—and he has many such, who would be glad their money should benefit him. Yes—I'll use it. Clem! run out and buy a packet of isinglass for me, and a chicken from the poulterer's, will you, my boy?"

"Sir, you may suppose I enjoyed seeing him eating that chicken—yes, and relishing it too! It was worth all the cuffs and hard names I had borne at Normanbury, to have earned that for those two dear people.

"Only once during his illness did he allude to Philip Steele, and then it was to tell me he was doing well in the service he had first entered. (I should have mentioned, by-the-by, that a gentleman in court that—that day had been so struck by his appearance and manner of giving his evidence, that he made inquiries about him, and ended by taking him as page.)

"I could have wished to see him once again," my master said, "and to have asked you both to shake hands there, by my bedside." (He was confined to his bed now.) "For you're a son of mine, you know, Clem, and he's another; and I can't have ill will between my boys. But now I'll only say that if you wish to comfort my last hours, you'll do your best to forgive him."

"I tried to harden myself, but it wouldn't do. I saw the earnest look of his poor eyes, and I couldn't resist it.

"I will try, sir."

"A squeeze of the hand was all his answer, and he turned his face to the wall. But I knew that I had given him infinite pleasure.

"He suffered much towards the close, but he wanted for nothing. His poverty had been discovered, and luxuries, delicate offerings, substantial aid, poured in upon him from all sides. Every comfort and alleviation that money could procure were his in those last hours, whose very liberality had not only kept him poor, but had prevented others from realising how poor he was.

"The end came. I can't describe it. Those who saw, will never forget it.

"He had taken leave of me, and of some others, hours before, for, unlike most persons in his complaint, he was conscious he was dying.

"Clem," he said, "let it cheer you in this parting, to know that you've been the greatest comfort to us both. And I know that you won't forget me."

"Never, sir, whilst I live."

"But remember me for good, my boy. Let my memory rouse you to resist evil. When you're tempted, Clem—when you're tempted—then remember me, and turn to Him!"

"He raised his thin white hand as he spoke, with a gesture of indescribable power. There was Heaven in his face then, the Heaven to which he was hastening.

"He died not many hours after.

CHAPTER IV.

"ONE of the last things my master did, was to obtain from Mr. Tudor, the rector (to whom he had told my story), a promise that he would take me under his special protection, and never rest till he had obtained me some employment. When, therefore, that gentleman was shortly after preferred to the deanery of B—, which removed him to a distant county, he took me into his own service as page. There I remained a couple of years, giving entire satisfaction, as I was told, but receiving very little; for there was not much sympathy in that house. The dean was absorbed in his learned books and writings, and the dean's lady almost as much so

in fashionable visits. Still, everything was done orderly in their establishment, and the dinners were considered first rate. And I had reason to be grateful to them, for, although they evidently distrusted me at first, they kept my secret, and thus gave me every chance of redeeming my character. From them I went to a neighbouring gentleman as second footman, and there continued five years, leaving him to better myself again by going to a widow lady of rank as upper footman, with a considerable increase of wages. Whilst with her, I became engaged to a young fellow-servant, who, although decidedly above me in rank (she was my lady's own maid), allowed herself to be touched by my devotion, and sincerely returned it. Fanny Pearson was remarkable for her beauty, but still more for her steadiness. We were too young and too poor to marry then, of course (I was but six-and-twenty, and she a twelvemonth younger), but we agreed, with my lady's entire approbation, that as soon as we should have saved enough to make it prudent, we would set up in business of some kind as man and wife.

"Nearly ten years had now passed since the event I have related, and I did hope I had really lived the hated evil down. But I never forgot it. A thrill of horror would often dart through me as I pictured to myself what I should feel if that disgrace should ever reach to Fanny's ears. Yet sometimes I half resolved to tell her the whole, for I doubted whether it was honest, whether it was justifiable, to keep from her such a fact. But I had not the courage to risk losing one I loved so dearly. I pondered over it uneasily; but I held my peace.

"When I had been rather more than three years in my lady's service, certain family changes obliged her to break up her establishment, and join her son on the Continent. In announcing to me this necessity, not without expressing great regret at parting with me, she said she hoped to help me to a far better and more lucrative place than her own. I need not say that I thankfully accepted her offer of a strong written recommendation to Mr. Grant, a friend of hers in London, who was looking out for a very steady man-servant for his invalid cousin, and set off for the metropolis to try my luck. I found Mr. Grant the most fussy and suspicious of mortals. He seemed to doubt everything, to be on his guard at all points, to be never tired of blessing his own soul and body. After my second interview with him, he wrote my lady a string of questions as long as my arm, and appointed me a third time to learn his final decision. I went, and was engaged. My lady's answer had been more than satisfactory. "Bless my soul and body! quite out of the way!"—and he handed me a note to take at once to my future mistress, informing her I was the servant he had engaged for her. As I was about to leave the room, a footman entering, informed him that the person who had called so many times before about Mrs. Hanway's place was there again now. "Again!"

Mr. Grant exclaimed, excitedly. 'Bless my soul, again! Dear me!' and running out into the hall, his servant and I following more leisurely behind, he fidgeted up to a man who was standing there hat in hand, and exclaimed, 'Bless my soul! here again! Why, I thought I told you I had nearly engaged a person—subject to character, of course! But that's turned out first rate, and now I *have* engaged him.'

"Very good, sir. I beg your pardon—I only called just for the chance," a civil voice replied that made my blood run cold. Till then Mr. Grant had hid the speaker from my sight; but now, as he turned to leave him, we suddenly stood in full view of one another. It was *Philip Steele*. Handsome, well dressed, almost gentlemanlike in appearance—Philip Steele.

"The blood rushed to my heart and brain; yet my senses were rather sharpened than otherwise, and I was able to observe him narrowly. He made one step forward, and said, with great respect to Mr. Grant, 'May I venture to ask if that is the person you have engaged, sir?'

"Bless my soul! yes, it is," that gentleman replied, in a fever, directly. 'Why? why? what? Bless my soul! what?'

"Because it is right to inform you, what you are probably not aware of, that that person, Clement Carew, was convicted of theft some years ago, and sent to prison.'

"Mr. Grant started as though he had been shot, and stared at him, trembling in every joint.

"Bless my soul! Bless my soul! And body! In prison!'

"He will not deny it himself, sir, if you will kindly ask him.'

"He spoke with apparent reluctance, as though fulfilling an unpleasant duty.

"Mr. Grant turned to me. 'Is this true?' he cried, literally dancing about in the extremity of his horror.

"He need not have asked. The truth was written in my face. I knew that I was white as the letter I held in my shaking hand. I was guilty; and looked so.

"I returned him that letter without one word. Words would not come just then.

"Bless my soul! but this is shocking, you know! Mr. Grant cried, his face shining with perspiration; 'this is—this is shocking! A man I had actually engaged for that poor helpless lady! With such a character! To deceive one so! Bless my soul and body! I'm sure,' turning to Philip, who stood there apparently unmoved, 'I'm sure I'm infinitely indebted to you for having—'

"But here words came to me, pouring forth from my bursting heart like a torrent.

"Yes, you are indebted! Yes, he spoke truth! I *was* sent to prison for theft—sent by *him*! I did steal a few pounds of meat to save my mother from starving! my mother who had nursed him day and night through a dreadful fever, and saved his life at the risk of her own!'

"Then I turned and confronted *him* with glaring, murderous eyes.

"This is the second time you have denounced, destroyed me; and if I don't tear you limb from limb, where you stand, it's not for your sake, nor yet mine, but for one I won't even name in your presence. There! you've had your turn twice—the third may be mine!'

"And dashing furiously past him, as he sprang aside, scared at the expression of my eyes, I threw myself on the door, and darted from the house.

"I ran as I had ran the day of the theft—as though I sought to fly from my own despair—I never stopped till I had reached my lodging. I tore through the little shop—past the astonished greengrocer and his wife, scraping asparagus on the counter—up into my own room, and locked myself in like a hunted creature. Hunted! I *was* hunted by the ghost of my own deed! That curse had found me out again—dragged me down as it would always do—as those thieves had said it would! I was lost for ever!

"All that day I sat there immovable—trying to think—a dull sense of agony weighing me down! Oh! it was hard! it *was* hard! I had so striven for the right—so resisted every temptation to even trivial faults—so prided myself on my honest name—on the trust reposed in me! so gloried in my lady's high recommendation! And now disgraced! publicly proclaimed a *thief*! For Mr. Grant's servant had been present; and Mr. Grant himself would of course inform my lady. *Fanny would know it!* I covered my face with my hands, and groaned aloud, as I thought of that. I longed to die—to throw myself into the river, and end it all. There was no peace for me on earth—no hope! And all because of *him*! What would the master say now? He would have me forgive him, no doubt! Forgive him! I would rather die for destroying him, than I would forgive him now.

"For three days I never moved from that room; the first night I never went to bed at all, but sat through the dark hours, motionless, staring at the sky, like one in a dream. The woman of the house, alarmed at my strange behaviour, came up to my room several times, bringing food by way of excuse, and, to rid myself of her importunities, I tried to eat. On the fourth morning she brought a letter. It was from Fanny. I opened it mechanically; too well I knew what it would, what it must contain. And I was not mistaken. All was to end between us. I could not be surprised, she wrote, at her refusing to keep to an engagement made in utter ignorance of my former life. She would try and forgive the cruel wrong I had done her, the deception I had practised, and I should have her prayers—But she must bid me farewell.

"I sat gazing vacantly at this letter as it lay open before me, altogether unconscious that the woman of the lodging was lingering in the room, watching me. At last she spoke.

"We've always been partickler, me and

Spraggs have, about the lodgers we've took in, and never done a unjust thing by no one—not since we set up in the greengrocery business—

"I looked up. I did not even comprehend her meaning.

"'Per'aps it'd be pleasanter for all parties if you was to suit yourself,' she said, bluntly. 'It's best to be straightforward, and so I tell ye.

"I understood her now. *She, too, had heard it!*

"Like one recovering from a long illness, feeble and sore smitten, I tottered from that place, and went out into the cold hard world again. I wandered far away into one of the humblest quarters of the town, and engaged the first poor room I could find. I had plenty of money. For a long time past I had been saving every penny I could spare with a precious object—I had saved for Fanny.

"Not long after, I fell seriously ill; and for a time I hoped that death would relieve me of my sufferings. But Providence had other things in store for me.

"After many months, being offered work by a neighbouring carpenter, who accidentally discovered my knowledge of the trade, I accepted it, more from a need of some occupation than from actual poverty. Then followed weeks, months, years of colourless, objectless existence, during which I performed mechanically the tasks set me, held no communication with any one that I could avoid, hated my species, almost hated myself; an existence without interest, without sympathy, *without forgiveness*. For I lived upon my resentment. I brooded over it. I renewed it day by day. I was for ever picturing to myself with vindictive delight the vengeance I would wreak on that arch enemy if I could. I longed that I were but free to injure, as I considered I was to abhor him. For my promise to my master was no longer binding in my eyes. No being in his senses could expect me to do other than hate Philip Steele now.

"I pass over those years, dreadful and godless as they were. In my desolation I did sometimes utter the Publican's prayer; but I never went to church; I never knelt down for five long years. I dared to be angry with my Great Creator. I writhed under an unutterable sense of injustice. I thought myself a hunted, doomed, accursed creature, shut out from all sympathy and love—utterly and for ever alone.

"A misanthrope has generally himself to blame full as much as the world. I see now that much of what I endured at that time I might have spared myself. If, instead of flying from the struggle, I had fought on, as Mr. Penrhyn once advised, I should have won my way at last. For I had friends, who valued, and would gladly have served me. My lady had taken no end of pains to sift my story, and had sought for me everywhere before she and Fanny went abroad. Dean Tudor had done the same, bearing strong and willing testimony in my favour; and last, but not least, my dear

mistress, when she learned from him what had chanced, never ceased to make inquiries for me. But I had left no trace. In my agonised desire to hide myself from all the world, I had changed my very name, and the words of kindness and encouragement that would have raised my crushed spirit were never spoken. So five dreary years passed by, and at thirty-one I was an old man in heart, if not in outward appearance. But long before that time I had engaged these premises, and set up on my own account. I had a morbid satisfaction in never suffering a human being to cross my threshold except on business—in encouraging the belief that I was crazed, though harmless.

"One evening, I was returning home after a late walk, when my attention was arrested by a crowd that surrounded a humble door-step in a street not far off. I did what I had not done for months—I might say years before—I addressed myself, of my own accord, to a fellow-creature, and inquired what was the matter. 'A man either dead or dying,' was the reply. 'A case of starvation, they say.' I could scarcely account for the impulse that induced me to approach, and as I did so, the crowd partially opened. 'Has any one ever a drop of brandy?' a policeman inquired, looking round. I had. I always carried a small flask of it in my pocket, being subject to a sort of spasm. I gave it him, following in his wake as he pushed his way back again, stooping down at last over an object on the step, which his bulky form concealed. 'I can't get his mouth open,' I heard him say. Then there was a buzz of voices.

"'Yes—yes—there—he swallowed——'

"'He's not dead——'

"'Ain't he?'

"'No. He did swallow.'

"'There! he's swallowed some more—plenty—no—he's not dead——'

"'That's enough—don't give him no more now.'

"And the policeman raised his tall figure and returned me the flask. In doing so, he moved a little on one side, and disclosed the form of the dying man. He was pale as death—his features attenuated—his clothes travel-stained and torn—his hat fallen off—his hair matted together—his whole appearance ghastly in the extreme. But there was no mistaking Philip Steele.

"I advanced a step or two to make sure of the fact. I gazed at him. I gloated over him. 'Have I found thee, O mine enemy?' I inwardly exclaimed.

"Yes, I had found him, as my utmost malice could have wished to find him. He was in my power now. Oh, joy unspeakable! Revenge at last!

"The brandy had so far restored him, that he showed signs of life, though still insensible. The police were talking of conveying him to the station-house, but I interfered. 'I know this man well,' I said. 'Bring him to my house. He is a—I will see to him myself.'

"As they carried him after me, it occurred to me to ask myself what I should do with this enemy of mine, now that he had fallen thus unexpectedly into my power. But I put off that consideration for the present. Let me but get him home! In the silence and solitude of my own house I would decide what to do with him.

"He was brought in here—through this shop—past where you're sitting now—up those stairs—and laid on my bed. Then some one volunteered to go for a doctor; and before you would have thought it possible, one had arrived—a young man with a shrewd careworn countenance—and was in full examination of the case. He shook his head over it. He doubted the patient's surviving the night. There had been recent serious illness, it was clear—fever probably; and that, with want of food and over-fatigue, had so prostrated the physical powers, that he doubted their rallying at all. He would send medicines, however, to be administered according to the directions given, and on the care with which these were obeyed would probably depend the last chance of life. There ought to be constant watching, giving of occasional stimulants, and later, food in very small quantities. Did I require a nurse? He could send a good one immediately.

"No, I would not hear of a nurse. I shrink from the idea of such a spy upon my actions. I said I would do all that was necessary for the man myself.

"Looking at me with that keen, almost suspicious eye of his, he remarked that he would call again in the morning, and, handing me his card in case I should want him sooner, repeated his injunctions as to care, and departed.

"I managed, not without difficulty, to undress the attenuated form, and lay it inside the bed; and having done so, went down to prepare myself some supper. I felt I must both eat and drink; strength might be required for what I had to do. Presently, a boy brought the medicines—two bottles, on one of which was written, 'To be taken immediately;' on the other, 'A sixth part to be taken every two hours.' I carried both up-stairs with my supper, and, sitting down by the bed, began, for the first time, to think!

"Here, then, was my enemy, at my mercy. The man who had twice blighted my life, destroyed my character, was in my power. I had but to throw away those medicines, to leave him alone there, and he would die; the doctor had said so again and again. And I should be revenged. He had made my life a living death, and I should make his a real one. And no creature would know. I should be safe from all risk of detection—alone in the house with him—the key in my pocket. The doctor would come next morning, and find him dead (as he had almost foretold), one phial empty, the other partially so. No eye could detect, no being discover, the secret of that untimely end. Nor need I move a finger to produce it. It was simply to be passive myself, and to let him be

so; to sit there, watching the lamp of life die out, as it must die if no fresh oil replenished it. And I should be revenged.

"But stay. Did I think no one would know? Was there not One who knew all—saw all? And in the eyes of that One, what would this thing be? Would it be murder?

"I turned; and looked, not without reluctance, at—at him. He was moving now, uneasily; his head had rolled quite off the pillow. Mechanically, as one picks up a thing dropped on the floor, I raised the weak head, and having smoothed the pillow, laid it down again. His eyes opened, as I did so, with a strange unconscious stare, then he closed them with a groan. I sat down again. From my place by the bed I could see the sky, lovely with soft white clouds, through which the moon was sailing fast, sometimes obscured for a moment, then emerging purer and brighter than ever, surrounded by a wide circle of brilliant light. I gazed long, thinking in a puzzled sort of way of the Almighty being who had made those heavens with all their countless stars, which might, for aught I knew, be each a separate world, wondering, with a sudden sense of awe, whether He was there, looking upon me now, as I sat in that dark room, brooding, meditating—*what?*

"Suddenly, the prostrate form raised itself, and, with a wild stare and wilder utterance, Philip cried out, 'Drink! drink! give me drink!'

"That cry recalled me to myself. I went to the drawers where stood the two medicine-phials side by side—his life, the doctor had said. I took the one 'to be given immediately,' poured it into a tumbler, and, supporting him with one hand, held it to his lips with the other, looking away from him as I did so. He drank it with indescribable greediness. 'Bless you! bless you for that!' he faltered, in a faint choked voice, and fell back again.

"Something in that unconscious blessing moved me strangely. It seemed as though he thanked me for sparing his life. Then all at once, as I looked up at the placid moon, whose rays made quite a broad path of light through the chamber, the image of that young curate rose before me. I saw in my mind's eye his pale earnest face, his kind eyes, as plain as I see you now. Again those words sounded in my ears, 'Remember me for good! When you are tempted, then remember me, and turn to Him. There is no happiness in hating; there is a God-like joy in forgiving.'

"Yes, I could imagine that joy now. I had tasted something of it but a few moments since, when I raised the weak form, and administered the saving draught. 'We cannot go on really hating those we benefit. It is not in our human nature.' How that man's words seemed to live again!

"I looked at Philip. Pale, utterly helpless, he lay there wholly at my mercy. But he was safe from me now—safe as though his mother watched beside him. He was no longer my enemy. My rancorous hate seemed to have

fled—vanished with the service I had rendered him. I felt I *could* forgive him, freely, unreservedly, as I hoped to be forgiven.

"I knelt down, and with my eyes fixed on his pale face, prayed, *really* prayed, for the first time for all those years. And then came over me such a flood of thankfulness as I had never known, never conceived before. And all through that long night of watching the spirit of my master was with me, and his words were ever sounding in my ears, 'There is a God-like joy in forgiving.'

"Sir, from that time I was an altered man. A great load seemed to have been suddenly lifted off me, and I was once more free. My enemy had reconciled me with my kind, and my hand was no longer against every man, and every man's hand against me.

"When the doctor came the next morning, he not only found his patient alive, but better than he had imagined possible. Indeed, he has since confessed that from all he had heard of my strange habits, he had thought the poor man's chance of life but a small one, and he could scarcely conceal his astonishment at the tender care with which I nursed and waited on him. That care had to be long continued, and I was at last compelled to seek for aid during the day-time, to enable me to attend to the business on which my livelihood and his depended. The doctor told me of a young woman, a servant out of place, who had quite a natural turn for nursing, and who, he was sure, would willingly give her services for some hours daily, if requested. I thankfully accepted his offer to speak to her. She came, and I leave you to imagine what I felt when I found my Fanny in that kind assistant—Fanny, who had never forgotten, never ceased to seek me since the real particulars of my story had been known, who had shed no end of tears on my account—Fanny, who had nursed her lady in her last illness at Paris, and had inherited a nice little sum at her death, enough to make it not imprudent now that she should marry—Fanny, who had found me out some time before, in spite of my change of name, and had adopted this method of once more meeting me—Fanny, who told me that she loved me better now for what I had done for the helpless man up-stairs, than she had ever done before, and would help me to tend and nurse him, not at this time only, but through life, if need be!

"And she did help me, bearing, as we long had to bear, with the peevish fretfulness, the fearful despondency of his peculiar disease, cherishing and serving him all the more, the more he needed help and pity. I will not dwell on his remorse, when, after a weary interval of suffering, his mind at last resumed enough of tone to enable him to comprehend something of the circumstances that surrounded him. Enough to say, that during the eight happy years of our

married life he has eaten of our bread, drunk of our cup, and been to us as a brother, nor will he quit us whilst we live. His illness left him far weaker in mind than in body. Drink had been his ruin. He had had no less than three attacks of delirium tremens; the last but a short time before I found him. And even now, though harmless and affectionate—and who can say how grateful—he is not to be trusted by himself, for he cannot resist temptation, and the least drop of drink upsets and drives him wild. He helps me in the shop, and watches over our children with a great devotion. He is out at this moment with our eldest girl—just seven—and will have kept her from the rain at the expense of a wetting himself. In the night school I have organised under Mr. Bertram's supervision, and which is one of my greatest pleasures, he is of infinite service. And there is not one of the boys there who does not know my story. For I am a living proof myself of the strength of early impressions, and I should strive to make them of use to others too. They may disappear for a time and be forgotten; but, like invisible ink, they come out again when exposed to the heat of temptation or suffering, and remain indelible. And many a lad has been lost after once falling, for want of a strong kindly hand to help him up again, a cheery voice like my dear master's to say 'Fight on! Fight on! Live down the evil you have done, and make yourself a new and upright name!'—Sir, my story is told."

"Well," said my friend, as we walked slowly homewards, on the loveliest of summer evenings, "was I wrong in telling you that that is a man worth knowing?"

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER XIX. YOUNG BRETT DISCOVERS ALL.

STILL under the impression that his office was a little "shabby," Young Brett had to reassure himself pretty often. All that Miss Manuel wished was to hear how a quiet lady died. He spoke to a waiter that night about Major Carter. An admirable gentleman, said the waiter, known and liked in the place. They were all sorry when he left. He was so gay and cheerful, and could tell such nice stories. And Mrs. Carter? A good woman too, but "soft" and quiet—by no means to come near the major. What did she die of? O, ill for a long time; regular break up. Began with a cold. In fact, only for the major, who took such care and sat up and slaved himself night after night, she would have been dead months before. A good charitable man—gay and pleasant too. (As if the charitable were not usually gifted with these qualities.) Where did he live, and the lady die? At Griffiths's, in the main street.

In the morning he saw the little dun town better, its tiny street, its house or two, whose second story projected over on pillars, and made a sort of summer-house below. He found that his hotel had one front which looked into the little main street, and another, heavy, massive, and of a chilling iron-grey, that made part of a terrace, and looked out across a little common upon the sea. This was now a cheerless prospect; and the iron-grey face was as rough and well scored with ill usage from the weather, as that of an old storm-beaten pilot.

He set off to Griffiths's. There were miniature shops, where they seemed to sell nothing but glass blacking-bottles full of sweets and lozenges, and in which articles a brisk trade must have been done. He found his way to a narrow yellow strip of a house, in the front bedroom of which Mrs. Carter had died. He knocked. It was opened by a tall bony woman. She stood with it half open, so that her figure, with the door, made up a perfect and satisfactory obstruction. Young Brett said cheerfully that he wished to see Mrs. Griffiths.

"About what?" said the other, sharply.

"Well," said Young Brett, "say about lodgings."

"There are no lodgings to let here, nor won't be," said the woman, preparing to close the door.

"But," said Young Brett, "I want to see Mrs. Griffiths."

"Well, what o' that?" said the woman, yet more sharply. "I am her; and I tell you we let no lodgings, and won't let them."

Brett, still good humoured and never to be put out of temper, said how provoking this was, and that it couldn't be helped. That he was a stranger in the place, and could he—this he put at a venture—see Mr. Griffiths?

"No ye can't, no nor him neither," she said, not so sharply now. "We don't waste time in this place, and you, young man, don't waste yours."

"You won't let me in, that's evident," said Young Brett, laughing.

"What is it?" said a voice behind the woman, and a hard-lined face, that had been in the world some sixty years, appeared on the shoulder of the woman. Said the woman: "He wants lodgings. Only think! Why, there's the hotel!"

The sixty years' face had sharp eyes and ragged hair. The sharp eyes twinkled. "Lodgings," it said. "We might, you know. It ain't the custom. But if a good thing offered—"

The bony woman turned on him. "Always for money," she said, wickedly. "You would sell your soul, and all our souls, for a Welsh tester. I tell you we won't."

"You think money is to be picked up in the street," he said. "Here is a gentleman who will make us a good offer, I know he will. And it is hard, precious hard—in my own house, too."

"Ah, go in," she said, with a rough good humour. "Don't let us be exposing ourselves in the street. It can't be done," she said to Brett. "Very sorry not to have you, sir. But we don't like to put ourselves out. And I have a hundred things to do; so—" She closed the door, making it finish what she was saying.

Young Brett went his way a little gloomy. "I can do no more," he thought, "if they won't let me in, or tell me anything." But he felt a little ashamed of coming back to Miss Manuel so unsuccessful. So he set off to take a walk in the grounds of the old castle next the town.

Some one "showed" it to him: i.e. received a

shilling. And Brett was walking briskly about to warm himself, when he came suddenly on a woman with two children. He recollected the woman at once.

"O, sir," she said, "I came to look for you. I heard a gentleman had been at our house, and I was sure it was the same."

"What, at Griffiths's?" said Young Brett. "And this is the little woman that nearly fell into the water? You must take care another time, 'little woman.'" He doted on children, and most children that he met were seen "toddling" to him with their little hands extended. This little child of the red cloak he stooped down and kissed. The mother looked at him with beaming eyes. She was young and fresh, and had a soft interest in her face.

"O, indeed, sir," she said, "we are so grateful to you. And you thought so little of it."

"Nonsense," said Young Brett, colouring, as he always did at praise. "You make me uncomfortable. So you were at Griffiths's?"

"I am their daughter-in-law," said she, "and live with them. My husband is dead. That little one there was his favourite."

"Nice little woman!" Brett took her up, and put her on his shoulder. "What does she like? Go-carts and dolls, and that sort of thing? I suppose they sell those sort of things somewhere?"

"O no, no, sir; you are too kind. But," she went on, with some hesitation, "you wanted lodgings, you said."

"Why—er—no, not exactly," said Young Brett, setting the little girl down. "I wanted to—see somebody—or to hear something—you know—more than the lodgings. Wasn't there a Mrs. Carter staying with you?"

The woman looked round with alarm. "Ah, I thought it was that," she said.

"Why?" said Young Brett, wondering.

"You wished to hear about *all* that. And I have been expecting it this long time back."

"Why, I dare say *you* know all about it," said he, eagerly; "that is, if there *is* anything to know."

She shook her head. "Something—not much. It is a long story, and a sad story, and a curious story, sir. If you wish to learn it all, you should stay here some time, and see people who ought to be seen. You should take our lodgings."

Young Brett looked at her astonished. "This is all mysterious," he said. "I *did* want to take your lodgings, but they won't let me take them."

"O, they will," she said. "He will. He is moaning over the loss of so much money at this very moment. If you come again, sir, in the morning—"

"But," said he, "this is all so odd; and if I were to go to your house, I don't know—I ought to be back in London."

"Some one should look to it," the young woman said.

"It? What?" echoed Young Brett.

"Her illness," said she, mysteriously. "It was very long, and very miserable, and—"

"How did she die?" said Young Brett, eagerly.

She shook her head. "I was kept away—shut out. Poor gentle lady, she fancied me a little, and somehow *he* took care always not to let me near her. He suspected me."

"Suspected!" said Young Brett, a little bewildered. "Suspected what?—and why should he suspect?"

The young woman shook her head and looked round. "*He* himself has been here, at our house. He knew that some one was coming, and told *them*. He has great influence with Mrs. Griffiths. But I say," she went on, with greater vehemence, "some one should look after it! You should stay here some days. There are people to be seen that know a great deal. I can tell nothing, because I know but little; but you are clever, and can use your eyes and head."

"Who am I to see?" said Young Brett.

They talked some time longer, and she told him—then went away.

There was a dingy apothecary's shop there, languid as regards business; its bottles, medicines, and apparatus, appearing under a delicate film of blue mould. The dispenser himself, as seen through a dusty pane, seemed to be suffering under the same powdery mite-eaten blight.

Young Brett walked into the shop briskly, and asked to see Doctor Jones. A boy came out from behind the dusty glass door of a back parlour, with hope in his face; but Young Brett, fresh, clean, and full of bright health, quickly dissipated all illusion. The boy's face fell. Doctor Jones appeared presently, a stooping, grey-haired, trembling old man, with a face of crushed and crumpled parchment. It was turned very shyly and suspiciously on the young officer. With his off-hand way, Young Brett said he wanted a box of cough lozenges. He did not say *for* a cough. Some such old friable fossils were discovered in a pigeon-hole and given to him. Then he began to talk pleasantly with the old man about the place, and about those who lived there.

There was a fire in the back parlour, and Doctor Jones, shivering a good deal, asked "would he come in and sit down?" Brett went in gladly, and had soon, with his old charm, recommended himself. Gradually he came to the subject that was in his mind, and cautiously mentioned the name of Major Carter.

The old man started back, and looked at him steadfastly, with his hands clasping the knobs of his chair. "Why do you mention *him*?" he said, quickly. "What do you want to know?"

"I?" said Young Brett. "I know him already—have known him ever so long. I knew his wife, too, poor lady!"

Old Doctor Jones squeezed up his eyes to look yet more suspiciously at his visitor. "Why do you talk to *me* about her?" he said. "It is all so long ago; it is better to let the whole thing be forgotten. I don't want to think of it. That is—if I was to be thinking of all the people I have attended, and what they suffered, what pleasant thoughts and pleasant dreams I should have!"

"So you attended Mrs. Carter?" said Young Brett, with blunt interest. "I want to hear about that illness. I am most anxious to know all about poor Mrs. Carter, and how she—"

Suddenly the dirty glass door was opened by a fresh pink-looking red-haired young man, with quick eyes, who stood with his hand on the door looking from one to the other. "Mrs. Carter's illness!" he said. "Well, what about it? She was ill, and she died, and was buried, like a thousand other people. Who is this gentleman, father?"

Young Brett answered promptly that they were merely talking over the town and the people who had lived there.

"O!" said the young man, with a half smile; "that was all, was it? How singular! I am Doctor Watkyn Jones. I carry on the business. He is not able to go about and do the visiting. Father, you had better go up-stairs; there is a better fire there." He held the door with a quiet look that seemed to amount to an order. Trembling and looking on the ground with his parchment face, the old man tottered away. As soon as he was gone, the other sat down at the table, and began to talk with great frankness. "I know what this is about, sir," he said, "perfectly well. The insurance people had persons down here poking and prying about, trying to get up suspicions against honest people. It is always their game. It is shameful! As far as I am concerned, I am determined they shall have no help; nor from any one belonging to me. Every honest man must set his face against such proceedings."

He spoke this so warmly, that Young Brett felt with him. "I assure you," he said, "I have nothing to do with insurance people of any kind—never heard of them, in fact."

"I hope you did not understand me so?" said the other. "I have known Major Carter a long time. He is an honourable man, not rich, but wishing to do what is right and respectable. You will hear nothing but good of him in this place."

"Well, certainly," said Young Brett, "so far I have indeed—"

"But he has enemies," continued the other. "I know he has. There is one powerful family up in London whom he has offended, and who are literally hunting him, for some fancied injury that they think he did to them. I know, sir, on good authority, instances of this persecution that would amaze you!"

Young Brett, a little confused and guilty, felt himself colouring all over.

"I know this myself. This insurance business was all got up by them. The company were going to pay, and a lady of this family went to the manager, and put it all into their heads. Only conceive such a thing, sir!"

Young Brett was indeed a little shocked and ashamed. Miss Manuel's inquiries about the irrefragable all flashed upon him.

"No, sir," said Doctor Watkyn Jones, confidentially drawing his chair closer, "you are a gentleman, and I shall make no secrets with you. When these insurance people came with their

mean sneaking hole-and-corner inquiries, we met them openly, and sent them back to their London office without a scrap of information. If you care, I shall tell you the whole thing."

Young Brett said eagerly that he would like nothing so much; and for nearly two hours—during which time not a single patient disturbed them—Doctor Watkyn Jones told him the story of Mrs. Carter's happy end, without pain, and in perfect peace. On Young Brett it left an impression of a very touching and impressing scene, and completely satisfied his honest heart. He had done the duty he had undertaken, and was delighted to find that it was to be a very small duty after all. Coming away light hearted, and with general esteem for the local practitioner, he gaily passed to his hotel, then wrote a long letter to Miss Manuel, and took an evening train across country to his regiment.

"I think," he wrote, "it has all turned out very well, and I begin to think myself quite a clever diplomatist. Do you not feel for poor Mrs. Carter? She was a good creature, and I am glad to think died so happily and with such comforts round her. Old Carter, you see, is not so bad, and with more heart than we fancied."

Young Brett, however, did not see the inconsistency between his earlier letters, describing what he had gathered from the young woman in the castle grounds, and his last. Miss Manuel did, and smiled to herself. "Poor honest boy!" she said; "he is too trusting and open to deal with people of this sort. I ought to have foreseen this from the beginning."

CHAPTER XX. MISS MANUEL ON THE TRACK.

SEEN in the Park, waiting on his Mrs. Wrigley, Major Carter's face seemed to have recovered its old clear brilliance. There was triumph in his eye. At last he was walking on the mosses of life, and he found it very grateful for his feet, a good deal blistered with stony travel. Things were going well with him. He had suffered friendly and complimentary delving in the ribs from cheerful acquaintances, together with the sly wink of encouragement, and the knowing "I see, Carter, my boy!" Mrs. Wrigley's face, too, wore the fat bovine smile of conquest. At her time of life such victories are welcome. Punsher Hill and Hoblush found themselves drifting away further and yet further every day, and made desperate efforts. Major Carter, too, had triumphed in another recent affair, and knew for certain that Young Brett's expedition had failed—failed hopelessly. It was indeed likely that, in a contest with a simple child, he should prevail. "Poor Miss Manuel!" he said, at the window of Mrs. Wrigley's ancient chariot, playing all his veteran coquetties, "she is recovering slowly, I hear; we shall not see her for weeks yet. Between ourselves, my dear Mrs. Wrigley, she tries too much—far too much. I don't like your ready women, ha, ha! No; when you are soft, and gentle, and feminine, and tender, and even helpless, my dear Mrs. Wrig-

ley," and here the ancient chariot swung heavily with a sort of jerk, in acknowledgment of the compliment, "you make us your slaves." The voice of the major dropped suddenly into a low, sweet, and meaning key. From the chariot window full gelatine eyes swam and languished.

"Come and dine with me to-day," she said. "You must."

"Too happy," said the major, with grateful humility; "but may I ask a favour? Would you 'send invitations,' he was fond of this old-fashioned expression, "to Hill and Hobbush?"

"Those odious clerical creatures!" said she, striving hard to recollect the mechanism of a "pout," but failing in the attempt. "How can you ask, Major Carter?"

"Dear Mrs. Wrigley," he said, "you don't know how wicked the world is, and how envious some natures are. Oblige me in this, will you?"

And she did oblige him. There was a pleasant little meeting that night, when the two clergymen came, and the major was "delightful" and in spirits, and enjoyed Mrs. Wrigley's old claret, which she knew he liked, and which she "spilled" profusely for him. After dinner, in the drawing-room, the major sat upon his chair, stirring his coffee, and profanely thought he was a sort of social Providence well able to control the little events and little worlds about him. And before that night was over, he—still holding his cup—had whispered some words to Mrs. Wrigley, which had suffused her bowl-shaped cheeks with the ghosts of ancient blushes, and she had lisped a faltering answer of delighted acquiescence.

But, at that very moment of success and happiness, there was another scene going on down at the little Welsh town, which, had he known of, would have turned the major's well-trained cheeks quite pale.

Miss Manuel had decided on her course promptly. She took up the thread where good foolish Young Brett had dropped it. The gloomy brother wondered why she was getting her things together, and where she could be thinking of going to at that rough season. He looked on suspiciously, and with roving eyes. "You are getting tired of the work," he said. "In good time you will forget *her*."

Miss Manuel's face flushed up with an intelligent look. "Ah, Louis," she said, "how little you know me. I am living but for *that*. And it is for this, and this only, that I go upon this journey to-night." That strange, moody, and injured manner was growing more and more upon him, and he was only half satisfied.

She was to go with her maid, and on that night. All during her illness, Fermor had been at the door, restlessly coming to and fro. He was never allowed to enter. Day by day he had heard welcome news of his gradual mending. Soon he heard of her being out, and of her driving about, and came hurriedly. He found

a cab at the door, and luggage was being placed on the top. What did this mean?

Miss Manuel met him on the steps. "What does this mean?" he repeated. "Going away! Why, you are not fit to travel."

He was struck by the change, and was almost pleased with himself for the romantic and quasi-paternal interest he was showing. She was gay, and in spirits, and laughed.

"What am I going for?" she said; "for a hundred reasons. Perhaps I want change of air—perhaps it is a mere whim—or perhaps I feel that I dare not trust myself here any longer, and that a woman's resolution is growing weaker every day. Is not the only course to fly? Adieu!"

This speech, had it been written, would have thrown Fermor into a tumult of conceit. But as it was spoken, something scoffing underlaid it. He looked at her with doubt and trouble.

"Don't go," he said; "I want to speak to you. They would not let me in during your illness; and I came day after day. I saw others let in. You should not treat me in this way. Don't go yet; I have a thousand things to say to you."

Again Miss Manuel laughed. "A thousand things to say to me at a cab door! You should learn to be more practical in these days of railways. Good-by."

"But," he said, eagerly, "how long do you stay? Tell me—do. Where shall I write to—"

"Drive on," said she to the servant. "Everything is in, I believe." Then to Fermor: "Well, I believe a month, or six months—or perhaps only a week. It depends. Good-by."

Fermor stood looking after the cab. This strange treatment chafed him; yet there was something pleasing under all.

Early the next morning, a lady's maid was asking at the mouldy dispensary where the maid's lady would be likely to find genteel and decent apartments, by the week. A delicate lady, newly recovered from sickness, who had been recommended bracing air. This was spoken to a boy behind the counter, who went in with the request to a back parlour, and came out again with an old man. The old man shaded his eyes with his hand, to look well at her.

"I don't know," he said, in a trembling voice. "My son Watkyn is away, and he would not like it, perhaps. Still, my dear, Watkyn likes a little money."

"But perhaps you know of some place?" said the lady's maid.

The boy said eagerly that their rooms were about the nicest in the place, and that the best quality came and stayed there. The maid then went away, and said she would report to her mistress.

Later in the day a delicate lady, whose face looked as if it could be very brilliant when in the full colour and flush of health, came into the shop, and the old man came out to her. He

shaded his eyes as before, but looked longer and harder than before. Into that dusty powdery region she seemed to bring light, and fragrance, and brilliance. The boy stood helpless with his mouth open. The old man kept muttering, "Good gracious, good gracious!"

"They told me," said Pauline, in her sweet voice, "that you had rooms. If yours are not to let, you might, perhaps, know of others. There would be an advantage, I confess, being only just recovered, in having medical assistance so near."

"Yes, yes," said the old man, hastily; "that is all true. Watkyn is considered clever all round the country, oh, for miles. I am sure he would not mind; he ought to like it, indeed he ought. It would be a surprise for him when he comes back. Heaven send we may all die in our beds!" Which odd speech, muttered to himself in a reverie, made Miss Manuel and the boy start. He started himself, and looked round nervously.

The rooms were taken. Before the day was out it went through the town, where there was a perfect drought of news, that a "fine" lady had come down, and was staying at "th' old doctor's." Later, too, the fine lady was seen herself, walking about, in the Green especially; and she spoke to the children playing there, and found out a little girl in a red cloak. For the little girl in the red cloak soon came a fresh and handsome young woman, and with the fresh and handsome young woman Miss Manuel began to talk.

The doctor's lodgings were clean and bright enough. They had a bow-window, and muslin curtains in the bow-window, and would have been very bright and encouraging apartments, but for a dreadful male portrait or two, done in rich tealboard colouring, which, clad in inflexible coats, with high collars apparently cut out of the hardest wood, and suggesting horrible associations of discomfort for the wearer, looked down with a mournful ferocity on the tenants as they sat at tea.

That night the doctor's son came home, and started as he saw a great box of Miss Manuel's in the hall. She heard his voice below, putting all manner of inquiries, half angrily, half suspiciously. Very soon he was up in the drawing-room, on the pretext of seeing that all was comfortable.

This pink Welshman, so free of speech, talked gaily with Miss Manuel, who presently set him quite at ease. One of her charms, which she could assume when she pleased, was a helplessness of manner, with a sense of finding strength and support in the person she was talking with. He was at first half curious, hinting as to where she came from, and how long was she going to stay, and why, of all places in the world, she selected that cold bleak corner to repair her health in. Pauline scorned a falsehood, or even a semblance of one; but somehow a misty idea was left in his mind that some one, say some

visitor, had spoken of the superior medical advice to be found in the little town. He told her by-and-by all about himself, for she showed great interest in such personal details; how his practice was increasing, how he soon expected to have the whole business of the place, and of the country round. He was making great way.

Said Miss Manuel, quickly: "And you have not long succeeded your father? He was practising last year, was he not?"

The other looked at her suspiciously. "Well, yes," he said. "But how did you know? That news did not fly up to London."

"Oh, I have heard a good deal since I came—even already," said Miss Manuel, smiling; but he had become doubtful and silent, and as he left the room, cast back a sharp quick searching look at her.

During these days Miss Manuel often went up and down, often went in and out, often looked wistfully at the glass door; but the son was always on quick sharp duty. She never saw that strange nervous old man who sat in the parlour over the fire—that is, could not see him alone, for when she met him, and tried to talk to him, the son stood by and watched jealously with his eye fixed on him. Under which eye old Doctor Jones always grew uneasy.

CHAPTER XXI. A STORMY NIGHT.

It went on, in this fashion, for a week, then for ten days, then for a fortnight. It was a jail-like existence. The lady who visited the watering place out of the season, and at a cheerless season out of the season, was an inexhaustible source of wonder and speculation to the inhabitants. The town maid, cut off from her circle of friends and acquaintances (when *her* season, too, was rife), began to murmur at heart, to grow reserved, and, later, became charged with lemons and vinegar about her face. Pauline herself was fretting and growing impatient. At last, on the night of a cold miserable day, whose tone had been blue as steel, the sea tumbling sharply and bitterly up the straits, and sharp icy east winds gashing at human chests and human eyes like cruel razors, an express came in from a neighbouring squire for young Doctor Watkyn Jones. Doctor Watkyn Jones's stories to Miss Manuel were, indeed, pure fables; he was not often sent for, and a Welshman of grim humour said his patients were all of the "God reward ye" class. The express from the squire was for the squire's lady—the great country doctor was away, and Watkyn was the nearest medical man. With the squire's express came a gig to take away Watkyn Jones.

At first he was dazzled and triumphant, and rushed to tell the London maid, who had been scornfully indifferent to him as an admirer, and who doubted his professional standing. "He was an imposture," she often said to Miss Manuel (thinking she was using the word "im-

postor"). Then his pink face became overcast. But it was late, ten o'clock, and he asked the London maid had her mistress gone to bed? The London maid, with a toss of her head, said she would be in bed in ten minutes. The triumph of the moment soon shut out every other thought, and he took his place in the gig with pride. "Go to bed, father," he said, sternly, fixing him with his eye; "you sit up too late. It is not good for you. If I had a moment, I should see you in bed before I left."

"Indeed I will," said the old man. "But what a night for me to be left alone. Do you hear the wind? Lord have mercy on us. That we may all die in our beds!"

The son did not wait to hear the last of this speech, but grumbled as he took his place in the gig. "He does not think of me out here," he said. The razors were indeed darting about wildly. Miss Manuel up in her room, and just about going to bed, heard the gig wheels and the voices below, and the news of Squire Morgan's wife being ill. She heard, too, the winds growling up the straits sulkily and sourly, as if they were coming up a tunnel. The London maid came in and told her all the details—with great zest, too, for she had now, like other prisoners, begun to take interest in things like social prison spiders or Picciolas. Her mistress listened eagerly.

"Is it far away?" she asked.

"O," the maid answered, "he will be away the whole night."

"I shan't go to bed yet," said Miss Manuel. "Don't wait up."

It was an old house, built when the little dun town was struggling out of being a mere village. The wooden bow-window rattled, as if the wind waited to get in, and was in a fury at being kept waiting. Every one was keeping close, even to the old watchman who managed the "curfew"—for they had their curfew in the dun town—and he was snugly sitting in the public-house. Miss Manuel, wrapping a shawl about her, came down stairs, and saw a light through the glass door of the parlour. She opened it softly.

The old man was looking nervously at the clattering windows, shrinking away from each gust. He did not hear or see Miss Manuel's entrance. He was saying to himself, in his old formula, "Lord have mercy on us! That we may all die in our beds!" when he looked round suddenly and saw his visitor—that is, a tall flashing woman with a light in her hand—a spirit surely, or an angel. For a moment he was terror-struck. Miss Manuel began to speak cheerfully to him and with encouragement. But he was scarcely to be reassured.

"What a night!" said she. "It makes one feel quite uncomfortable."

"Ay! what a night," he said. "God Almighty be with us."

"Not a night," said she, "I be sitting alone. We want company, and not to be left to our own thoughts."

"No, indeed," said the old man, looking at her strangely, "and it was odd, wasn't it, that he should have been sent for to-night, when—when—"

"When we would like the house to have all its tenants. Yes," she said, "it is odd. Yet it has happened fortunately for me. I wished to speak to you."

"To me?" said the other, starting up. "Why to me? What do you want to know?"

Miss Manuel smiled. "How odd, now!" she said. "I never said I wished to know anything. That would be accepted as suspicious elsewhere."

"Suspicious! Who is talking of suspicions?" said the old man, now very agitated.

She fixed her eyes on him. "Why," said she, suddenly—"why is it that your son always watches you so?"

"Watches me? No—he does not."

"Yes he does," said she, quickly. "I have remarked it. It seems as if you had some secret which he was afraid you would disclose."

The look of stupid wonder and confusion the old man gave her, she recollected long afterwards. He could not answer.

"Another question," said Miss Manuel. "Good gracious! what a gale. Did you feel the house rock then? What is the reason that you are always talking of dying in our beds? I have heard you say so many times."

He looked at her now quite scared. "Why do you come to me in this way?" he said, tossing his hands, "when there is no one in the house? When he is away? And on such a night, Lord deliver us! What do you want? You have some dreadful thing in your mind. And—I have said nothing and done nothing."

She soothed him. "Don't be alarmed," she said. "I am very solitary up-stairs. The wind always frightens me. No wonder I should like a little company. You talk of dying in our beds, but think of any poor soul departing on such a night as this—rushing from the world in a storm! Are there any now in Beaumaris, I wonder? I passed a house this very day where there was a lady dying not so very long ago. Griffiths's they told me it was called."

The old man was now standing up. "My son was right," he said; "he told me so. He warned me. He knew it. Ah! you have watched for this opportunity. You have got me here alone and helpless. It is unfair; it is—"

"Hush! hush!" said Pauline, drawing herself up. "You will betray yourself. Suppose that I have? Suppose I have come down to seek and to discover and to bring the guilty to justice—to track out a foul crime? Suppose I have watched for, and found an opportunity? Suppose I have found you here alone and helpless, as you say; you may bless your stars for it! For it is the only chance that offers to save you from what you dread, and from what I can see is preying on your soul and on your conscience."

And that chance is—I tell you openly and plainly—confession!”

He was speechless with terror and astonishment.

“Take care, take care,” she went on, quickly. “You don’t know what is hanging over you. The net is drawing closer every day. There is danger and ruin coming, and coming fast. You can save yourself by helping me. I know more than you think I know. Do you refuse or hesitate? If you dare to tell your son when he returns, I shall go away at once, and let everything take its course. Shall I go now?”

She took up her light, and stayed a moment with her hand on the door.

At last he found speech. “But I have done nothing. I know nothing. I am so old. I have—”

“No, no,” said she, coming back with a reassuring smile. “Who thinks so? No one. But still you know much, and know much that you can tell. Shall I sit down, or—” And again she laid her hand on the candle.

“But—but—my son—my son,” said he, shaking his hands despairingly; “what will he say?”

“What will he say when I go away—when the whole becomes public—when you are both dragged away as accomplices—when this town, and this principality, and this kingdom are ringing with the news of the cruel business that was done down here?”

“Who are you?” he said, full of terror. “What do you want with me? I am a poor miserable old man, and must die soon. It is cruel. I have no strength. My son would protect me if he were here. I am a miserable creature that would not hurt a fly, and must die soon.”

Pauline started up, and stood before him like a destroying angel. “You are old,” she said, “and miserable, and have the long long days of a long life to count up. You must die soon. Yes, but how? There are other ways than that dying in your bed you are so anxious for. For all your years and all your misery, you may yet be dragged to a shameful end. He who looks on is as guilty as he who does the work.”

The old doctor shrank away from her, and tried to hide himself behind his hands. “Don’t, don’t speak so awfully,” he said, trembling. “I am an old miserable creature who would harm no one.”

Pauline looked down on him for a moment. “Very well,” she said. “Be miserable, then; I have done. On your own head be it. Do as you like; and I leave you now—”

She turned to go. At that moment the wind came with a fresh howl and fresh fury down the street: a crash only a few houses away, as of a chimney hurled down into ruins. Then silence; and the old man crouched and cowered into his arm-chair, as if it were a cave where he could hide his head. She had her hand on the door, and it opened noisily.

“Don’t—don’t leave me,” he said, piteously. “I shall be destroyed if I am left alone. There, I will tell you all—that is, all I know.”

EGYPTIAN REMINISCENCES.

I WAS travelling in that strange land which separates Nubia from Upper Egypt, and had for a guide, from the beautiful ruins of Philæ into the stony waste which lies between the green banks of the Nile and the Red Sea, a black man, a native of the locality, his name Mohammed Hassan, who had many a tale to tell of the Djins who visited that mysterious district, and he recounted their doings with as strong and confident a faith as prophet or martyr ever exhibited. He was a zealous Mahomedan, and prided himself on the superiority of Islamism to every other creed; he was rather eager for, than disinclined to, religious controversy; and if he failed to convince his European opponents that the Koran was a better book than the Bible, he would shrug his shoulders and say, “Tahib!—tahib—well! well! so the Khowajah (Christian gentleman) has been taught, and of course he knows no better. Inshallah! If Allah so will, he may be wiser by-and-by.”

Next to the wild and wondrous region, the wilderness which is spread out from the north-east of Akaba, and which terminates in the heights of Mount Sinai, there are few spots in the desert invested with more solemn charms than that of which I am speaking. There stand towering over the arid waste immense boulders of granite, of varied and grotesque shapes, upon the sides of which are engraved huge letters, whose date, undoubtedly of very high antiquity, has not yet been determined by antiquarian philologists. It is said to be the old country of the Essenes, and the capital city is still called Essouan, or Assouan. Out of these boulders the pillars of Thebes and On and Memphis and Alexandria were quarried. Some of the monoliths still remain unmoved in their native beds, the holes prepared to receive the chisels which were to separate them from the rock still remaining.

This was one of the stories of Mohammed Hassan:

A caravan was on its progress to the holy cities. Its course was through the road which passes between the granite rocks of the Nubian frontier, and it was composed, as usual, of hundreds of camels, some horses belonging to the opulent pilgrims, asses of the humbler, while many, the lowliest of all, made their way on foot, glad to avail themselves of the protection, and often dependent on the charity, of their more privileged companions. Among them was a rich man, a native of Kordofan. He wore a handsome green turban, evidence of his belonging to the family of the prophet, and it obtained for him the respect of the multitudinous, many-conditioned company. At the first stage from Assouan he descended from his horse, which

he delivered over to one of his servants, and, wearied with his journey, opened his Persian rug, spread it out on the sand, and fell soundly asleep.

The sun was sinking, and as the twilight is very short in the equinoctial regions, he was soon surrounded by as much of darkness as ever overshades the country within the African tropics, where, indeed, a cloud is seldom known to interrupt even for a moment the brightness of the moon and the stars, and a generation of men passes away without their having seen a single drop of rain.

Through the calm night the slumbers of the pilgrim had been uninterrupted. But, just before the rising of the sun, the breeze of the morning felt cold upon his head; he put up his hand, the green turban was gone—it was his bald and shaven skull that had been exposed to the wind.

He rose in consternation. The pilgrims gathered round him, and with affrighted looks and inquiring tongues they listened to his story. Many of the pilgrims had something to report of their night visions. They had heard voices, they had seen spirits, the camels, horses, and asses had shown unusual restlessness, and it was agreed by common consent that the camp had been visited by the Djins; but whatever other mischief had been done, the loss of the green turban was allowed to be a sore calamity.

It is seldom that a large caravan is unaccompanied by necromancers of more or less celebrity, the profession and the practice of the magic art being by no means a rare accomplishment in the Levant, and a man was found who, though he did not pretend to be a sorcerer of a high order, or fitted to deal with very potent genii, offered to do his best for the discovery and restoration of the green turban. The preliminary discussions occupied the day, but it was only at night the Djins were likely to appear.

And when the night came, he went forth on his mission. This is the report he made on his return to the assembled caravan. He called again and again upon Allah to witness the truth of his narrative, and many a voice responded, "Maloum! maloum! it is certainly so!"

"I had a sure knowledge of the path I was to take. The moon was shining, and I made my way to the granite rocks. On the top of one of the highest, I fancied I saw something in motion. I moved towards it quietly, and I saw that its colour was green. Approaching nearer, I satisfied myself that it was the lost turban. The rock sloped from the summit to the ground, but, though rough, the ascent was not so steep as to prevent my climbing up, which I determined to do, never losing sight of the turban, which was on the very summit. So, holding my breath, I slowly clambered to within a foot of the turban, when I stretched out my hand to seize it, but the turban rose as my hand approached it, and a head with bright eyes appeared, wearing the turban. I again put forth my hand, but the turban mounted still higher, and stopped when it was just beyond my reach.

"I sprang upon my feet," I made another desperate effort to grasp the turban, but the neck of

the Djin—for it was a Djin, my brethren—was stretched longer and longer—longer than the neck of a giraffe. The turban was altogether unreachably. I was affrighted. I tumbled down the rock. I found myself lying on my face in the sand. At last I looked up; there was neither turban nor Djin. Yallah! Yallah! every word that I have uttered is true."

The pilgrims all listened reverently, and each one said to his neighbour, "Allah Kerim!"

But the Afrits, the giant devils, are far more terrible things than the Djins, and most of the Nubians have wonderful stories to tell of what they themselves have seen, and stories far more wonderful of what they have heard. If you distrust their veracity, or laugh at their credulity, they become silent, and there is an end to their disclosures; but encourage their outpourings, throw no doubt upon their narratives, win your way to their confidence, and you may gather tales for more than a Thousand and One Nights of amusement.

There is no locality on the earth's surface which seems more suggestive of strange and supernatural visitations than that through which I journeyed with Mohammed Hassán. One could fancy that there had been, ages and ages ago, a fierce war between gigantic spirits, and that this location of the wilderness was the field where the granite masses which they had hurled at each other had been left as evidence of the terrible fray. The contrasts between the light-coloured sand and the deep shadows of the boulders, give abundant food for the imaginings of a creative fancy, especially when innumerable traditions have associated "the spirit world" with the daily business of life. Nor could the most sceptical, the strongest-minded man, pass in the twilight or the darkness, through some parts of that solemn scenery, without a certain amount of awe, which would be ministered to by the cries of wild birds above, or savage beasts below, by sudden interruptions to his progress, by mysterious writings on the rocks, by the contrasts of silence and solitude with sudden sounds and screams, all explicable, perhaps, in the bright sunshine, but very perplexing in the gloaming and the gloom.

Nearly the third of a century has passed since I recorded on the spot some fragments of a conversation with my guide.

HASSÁN. This is the place where the Afrits dwell.

I. Did you ever yourself see an Afrit?

HASSÁN. Yes. Four times in my life I have seen Afrits.

I. Was it in this neighbourhood?

HASSÁN. Eiwa! I will tell you what happened not far from this very spot; it is the pure truth, by Allah! I was passing this way, with a little boy for my companion. We were on foot, and I was very tired. Looking all around, I saw something dark in the distance; it stood still while we moved towards it, and we found it was a beautiful male donkey, a large beautiful black donkey. I tell you it was black; it was jet black. Nobody was near it; it had no

owner. It had neither saddle nor bridle; but I quietly mounted on its back, and without my taking any trouble to guide it, it moved on in the way I intended to go, and being somewhat weary and thirsty, after having ridden for several hours, I jumped down from its back, held it firmly by the ears, and directed the boy to go to a spring of water that was not far off, and to return as speedily as he could. When he came back, he found the donkey had departed. I was lying on my face in the sand. I will tell you the whole truth, Khowajah. I had been repeating the Bismillah. No evil spirit can abide when a verse from the Koran is uttered. It was an Afrit, and I have told you how it came and why it went away.

I. Now, was it really so, Hassan? Are you not frightened when you come into these parts?

HASSAN. Alhamdur lillah. Praised be Allah. Not now. Have I not learnt that the Afrit is always frightened away by El Kitab (the book)?

I. La mahalah! No doubt about it.

HASSAN. And now I will tell you of another meeting, most true, most true. I once saw an Afrit as tall as an obelisk. He was a great way off. He lifted up his hand, and beckoned me to come to him. I covered my face with my cloak. I repeated a verse from the Kitab. I heard a dreadful howl. The Afrit passed close to me, but dared not do me any mischief; and when I let fall my cloak no Afrit was to be seen.

He told us that the Afrits did not always take the shape either of man or beast. They sometimes hid themselves in the clouds and the thunder-storms—that he had once seen a grey mist in the island of Elephanta—it was an Afrit; it fled when the Koran was quoted. "And now," said he, "we do not fear the Afrits as our forefathers feared them; and the Afrits, knowing that we can always get rid of them, do not the same mischief they were formerly used to do."

When Hassan had finished, other contributions poured in, and one of our fellow-travellers said: "I have heard from the Arabs a tale connected with this very spot. Not far away rough granite rocks are piled upon one another, so as to form a rude but inaccessible fortification. In the very centre there lived, not many years ago, a terrible giant who, from time to time, came out of his hiding-place, stood at the entrance of one of the narrow passes, and levied contributions on every traveller before he was allowed to go through. His first ordinary demand was for a fair young virgin for his harem, with a jar of araki for his table; if the traveller declared that he had no means of procuring these, the option was given of surrendering a bag of gold; but when the giant was disappointed of both his requirements, the unfortunate victim was seized, thrown into a den within the castle, where in his turn he was murdered and devoured. But though the giant sometimes failed in mulcting those who fell into his hands, he had had so much success as to fill his apart-

ments with beautiful maidens, his cellars with great supplies of araki, and his coffers with enormous quantities of gold. Among the imprisoned damsels was the lady-love of a young merchant, who determined, at whatever hazard, to effect her liberation. After turning over various stratagems in his mind, he at last resolved to disguise himself as a woman, and, with a very large vessel of araki, placed himself at the entrance of the pass. At sunrise the giant came forth to prowl as he was wont, and, seeing the immense jar filled with his beloved liquor, he exclaimed, 'This is indeed an unexpected good fortune!' So he seized the jar, and beckoning to the supposed lady, he commanded her to follow him. The youth did so, and while the giant was descending the rugged steps, made of the granite rocks, which led down to his abode, his follower drew a sword which he had concealed under his garments, and suddenly cut the hamstrings of the giant, who fell, crushed by the weight of the araki jar, and stifled with the liquor it poured out, as it was broken by the fall, upon which the young man came forward, tumbled the giant into the abyss below, pelting him with the fragments of the broken vessel. He then made his way into the dungeons of the castle, and having first liberated his beloved one, he released numberless other imprisoned ladies, gathered together immense treasures, which enabled him to live the rest of his life in luxury and splendour, having, as a matter of course, married the damsel he had redeemed."

And here we hear another version of the turban story, and are assured the real facts were, that: "A devout Mussulman, being very thirsty, reached a sacred well in the desert which was close to the place where we were sitting—for it must be mentioned that the Arabs like to identify a tale with a locality, which adds not a little to its interest and seeming truth. He took off his turban, and placed it on a neighbouring rock. After drinking he went to the rock, and instead of his turban he saw there a large piece of raw beef, but on the summit of a higher and more distant cliff he perceived the missing turban. While he stared with astonishment the cliff moved, and its summit was stretched out like the neck of a dromedary, carrying the turban on its head. The holy man then knelt down at the side of the well, and implored the favour of the sheikh in remembrance of whom it had been built. He continued praying till he fell asleep from weariness, and on awakening he found his turban on his head. The piece of beef had disappeared, the rock had returned to its natural shape, and he went on his way rejoicing."

Wells in the wilderness are often dedicated to the memory of some holy man who has left behind him a reputation for wisdom and piety. On one occasion, when exhausted with heat and travel, we entered the dome-shaped tomb of a venerated dajji, in which we found a lamp burning, and a jar of fresh water; the lamp was to be kept always alight, the cruse always filled, so that a fire to cook his victuals, and water to

quench his thirst, might never be wanting to the traveller in that part of the desert. Could philanthropy—Christian philanthropy—be exhibited in a more touching shape than by this sheikh of the wilderness?

The physician of Uafil Bey of Zaitoun, the son-in-law of Veli Pasha, is Mr. Dellapietra, from Zante. He is as highly educated a man as it is possible to find, having had the advantage of twelve years under the best masters in Paris. To these recommendations are added a penetrating intellect, habits of observation, and the most lively interest in the pursuit of knowledge. He has the most delicate sense of truth and honour, his conduct is eminently virtuous, and he is exempt from religious and popular prejudices. He always endeavours to find a natural solution for phenomena which startle not only the vulgar and ignorant, but even the most enlightened men. Mr. Dellapietra told me himself, that during his stay in Paris, he fortified his habits of incredulity to a degree that placed him on a level with the best-known sceptics of France. These ideas he brought with him to Turkey; but as a worshipper of truth, an observer of nature, and, indeed, as a philosopher, he could not refuse to yield conviction to evidence. He began by feeling that his negative system was not so excellent as to exclude all others, and that there were cases which it could not explain; and he finished by seeking in unknown causes the solution of certain events, which from their rarity are termed supernatural by un instructed people, and rejected as empty chimeras by the self-sufficiency of our proud savants.

Mr. Dellapietra related to me the following facts:

Some time since he was sent for from Zante to attend upon a Turk who was suffering from illness at Pyrgos, in the district of the ancient Elida in the Morea. During his stay in this little town he made the acquaintance of one of the Greek residents, a Mr. Agholoz, a gentleman living on his means. He confirmed what Mr. Dellapietra had previously heard stated to him by several other persons; namely, that Mr. Agholoz had in his possession a book, written in Arabic, with Arabic letters in one column, and in the other column the same words in Arabic with Greek letters. This book had been in the family for many generations, passing from father to son, and by means of the utterance of certain words which are marked in this ancient volume, Mr. Agholoz is in the habit of curing the maladies of cattle, which are brought to him for the purpose from many miles round; and more especially in summer, when serpents abound in the Morea, and when men and beasts are daily bitten by them, a cure is instantaneously effected by the use of these cabalistic words.

The possessor of this book is not a credulous man, and he is free from any special leaning to his art; and while he laughs at his own practices, he only lends himself to the work from complaisance. He cannot but admit, however, that

his method is infallible, although unable himself to account for his success. What he does, moreover, is entirely gratuitous.

THE MODERN GENIUS OF THE STREAMS.

WATER to raise corn from the seed, to clothe the meadow with its grass, and to fill the land with fruits and flowers; water to lie heaped in fantastic clouds to make the fairy land of sunset, and to spread the arch of mercy in the rainbow; water that kindles our imagination to a sense of beauty; water that gives us our meat and is our drink and cleans us of dirt and disease, and is our servant in a thousand great and little ways: it is the very juice and essence of man's civilisation. And so, whether we shall drag over cold water, or let hot water drag us, is one way of putting the question between canal and steam communication for conveyance of our heavy traffic. The canal-boat uses its water cold without, the steam-engine requires it hot within. Before hot water appeared in its industrial character to hiss off the cold, canals had all the glory to themselves. They are not yet hissed off their old stages and cat-called into contempt by the whistle of the steam-engine, for canal-communication still has advantages of its own, and canal shares are powers in the money-market.

Little more than a century ago, not only were there neither canals nor railroads in this country, but the common high roads were about the worst in Europe. Corn and wool were sent to market over those bad roads on horses' or bullocks' backs, and the only coal used in the inland southern counties was carried on horseback in sacks for the supply of the blacksmiths' forges. Water gave us our over-sea commerce, that came in and went out by way of our tidal rivers; and the step proposed towards the fostering of our home industries was a great one when it occurred to somebody to imitate nature by erecting artificial rivers that should flow wherever we wished them to flow, and should be navigable along their whole course for capacious flat-bottomed carrying boats.

The first English canal, indeed, was constructed as long as three hundred years ago at Exeter, by John Trew, a native of Glamorganshire, who enabled the traders of Exeter to cancel the legacy of the spite of an angry Countess of Devon, who had, nearly three hundred years before that time, stopped the ascent of sea-going vessels to Exeter by forming a weir across the Exe at Topham. Trew contrived, to avoid the obstruction, a canal from Exeter to Topham, three miles long, with a lock to it. John Trew ruined himself in the service of an ungrateful corporation.

After this time, improvements went no further than the clearing out of some channels of natural water-communication, until the time of James Brindley, the father of the English canal systems.

James Brindley was born in the year seventeen 'sixteen, the third of the reign of George the First, in a cottage in the parish of Worm-hill, midway between the remote hamlets of the High Peak of Derby. There his father, more devoted to shooting, hunting, and bull-running, than to his work as a cottier, cultivated the little croft he rented, got into bad company and poverty, and left his children neglected and untaught. The idle man had an industrious wife, who taught the children, of whom James was the eldest, what little she knew; but they must all help to earn as soon as they were able, and James Brindley earned wages at any ordinary labourer's work that he could get until he was seventeen years old. He was a lad clever with his knife, who made little models of mills, and set them to work in mill-streams of his own contrivance. The machinery of a neighbouring grist-mill was his especial delight, and had given the first impulse to his modellings. He and his mother agreed that he should bind himself, whenever he could, to a millwright, and at the age of seventeen he did, after a few weeks' trial, become apprentice for seven years to Abraham Bennett, wheelwright and millwright, at the village of Sutton, near Macclesfield, which was the market town of Brindley's district.

The millwrights were then the only engineers; they worked by turns at the foot-lathe, the carpenter's bench, and the anvil, and in country places where there was little support for division of labour, they had to find skill or invention to meet any demand on mechanical skill. Bennett was not a sober man, his journeymen were a rough set, and much of the young apprentice's time was at first occupied in running for beer. He was taught little, and had to find out everything for himself, which he did but slowly, so that, during some time, he passed with his master for a stupid bungler, only fit for the farm-work from which he had been taken. But, after two years of this sort of pupilage, a fire having injured some machinery in a small silk-mill at Macclesfield, Brindley was sent to bring away the damaged pieces, and by his suggestions on that occasion, he showed to Mr. Milner, the mill-superintendent, an intelligence that caused his master to be applied to for Brindley's aid in a certain part of the repairs. He was unwillingly sent, worked under the encouragement of the friendly superintendent with remarkable ability, and was surprised that his master and the other workmen seemed to be dissatisfied with his success. When they chaffed him at the supper celebrating the completion of the work, his friend Milner offered to wager a gallon of the best ale that before the lad's apprenticeship was out, he would be a cleverer workman than any of them there present, master or man. This was a joke against Brindley among his fellow-workmen; but in another year they found "the young man Brindley" specially asked for when the neighbouring millers needed repairs of machinery, and sometimes he was chosen in preference to the master himself. Bennett asked "the young man Brindley" where

he had learnt his skill in millwork, but he could tell no more than that it "came natural like." He even suggested and carried out improvements, especially in the application of the water-power, and worked so substantially well, that his master said to him one day, "Jem, if thou goes on i' this foolish way o' workin', there will be very little trade left to be done when thou comes out o' thy time: thou knows firmness o' wark's th' ruin o' trade."

But presently Jem's "firmness o' wark" was the saving of his master. Bennett got a contract to set up a paper-mill on the river Dane, upon the model of a mill near Manchester. Bennett went to examine the Manchester mill, brought back a confused and beery notion of it, and, proceeding with the job, got into the most hopeless bewilderment. An old hand, who had looked in on the work, reported over his drink at the nearest public-house that the job was a farce, and that Abraham Bennett was only throwing away his employer's money. Next Saturday, after his work, young Jem Brindley disappeared. He was just of age, and it was supposed that he had taken it into his head to leave his master and begin life on his own account. But on Monday morning, there he was at his work, with his coat off, and the whole duty to be done clear in his head. He had taken on Saturday night a twenty-five mile walk to the pattern mill near Manchester. On Sunday morning he had asked leave of its proprietor to go in and examine it. He had spent some hours on Sunday in the study of its machinery, and then had walked the twenty-five miles back to resume his work and gave his master from a failure that would have been disastrous to his credit. The conduct of the work was left to him; he undid what was amiss, and proceeded with the rest so accurately, that the contract was completed within the appointed time, to the complete satisfaction of all persons concerned. After that piece of good service, Bennett left to James Brindley the chief care over his business. When Bennett died, Brindley carried on to completion all work then in hand, and wound up the accounts for the benefit of his old master's family. That done, he set up in business on his own account at the town of Leek, in Staffordshire; he was then twenty-six years old, having served seven years as an apprentice, and two years as journeyman.

Leek was then but a small market town with a few grist-mills, and Brindley had no capital; but he made himself known beyond Leek as a reliable man whose work was good and durable, who had invention at the service of his employers, and who always finished a job within the stipulated time. He did not confine himself to mill-work, but was ready to undertake all sorts of machinery connected with the draining of mines, the pumping of water, the smelting of iron and copper, for which a demand was then rising, and became honourably known to his neighbours as "the Schemer." At first he had no journeyman or apprentice, and he cut the tree for his own timber. While working as

an apprentice, he had taught himself to write in a clumsy half-illegible way—he never learnt to spell—and when he had been thirteen years in business, he would still charge an employer his day's work at two shillings for cutting a big tree, for a mill-shaft or for other use. When he was called to exercise his skill at a distance upon some machinery, he added a charge of sixpence a day for extra expenses.

When the brothers John and Thomas Wedgwood, potters in a small way, at the outset of their famous career, desired to increase the supply of flint powder, they called "the Schemer" to their aid, and the success of the flint-mills Brindley then erected brought him business in the Potteries from that time forward.

About this time, also, a Manchester man was being married to a young lady of mark in the Potteries, and during the wedding festivities conversation once turned on the cleverness of the young millwright of Leek. The Manchester man wondered whether he was clever enough to get the water out of some hopelessly drowned coal mines of his, and thought he should like to see him. Brindley was sent for, told the case and its hitherto insuperable difficulties, went into a brown study, then suddenly brightened up and told in what way he thought that, without great expense, the difficulty might be conquered. The gist of his plan was to use the fall of the river Irwell that formed one boundary of the estate, and pump the water from the pits by means of the greater power of the water in the river. His suggestion was thought good, and, being set to work upon this job, he drove a tunnel through six hundred yards of solid rock, and by the tunnel brought the river down upon the breast of an immense water-wheel fixed in a chamber thirty feet below the surface of the ground; the water, when it had turned the wheel, was carried on into the lower level of the Irwell. That wheel with its pumps, working night and day, soon cleared the drowned outworkings of the mine; and for the invention and direction of this valuable engineering work he seems only to have charged his workman's wages of two shillings a day.

An engineer from London had been brought down to superintend the building of a new silk-mill at Congleton, and Brindley was employed under him to make the water-wheel and do the common work of his trade. The engineer from London got his work into a mess, and at last was obliged to confess his inability to carry out his plan. "The Schemer" Brindley was applied to by the perplexed proprietor. Could he put the confusion straight? James Brindley asked to see the plans, but the great engineer refused to show them to a common millwright. "Well, then," said Brindley to the proprietor of the mill, "tell me exactly what you want the machinery to do, and I will try to contrive what will do it. But you must leave me free to work in my own way." He was told the results desired, and not only achieved them, but achieved much more, adding new

contrivances which afterwards proved of the greatest value.

After this achievement, Brindley was employed by the now prospering potters to build flint-mills of more power upon a new plan of his own. One of the largest was that built for Mr. Baddely, of which work there is record in such trade entries of his as "March 15. 1757. With Mr. Badley to Matherso about a now" (new) "flint mill upon a windey day 1 day 3s. 6d. March 19 draing a plann 1 day 2s. 6d. March 23 draing a plann and to sat out the wheelrace 1 day 4s."

At this time Brindley is also exercising his wit on an attempt at an improved steam-engine; but though his ideas are good, it is hard to bring into continuously good working order, and after the close of entries about it in his memorandum-book, when it seems to have broken down for a second time, he underlines the item "to Run about a Drinking 1s. 6d." But he confined his despair to the loss of a day and the expenditure of eighteen-pence. Not long afterwards he had developed a patent of his own, and erected, in seventeen 'sixty-three, for the Walker Colliery at Newcastle, a steam-engine wholly of iron, which was pronounced the most "complete and noble piece of iron-work" that had, up to that time, been produced. But the perfecting of the steam-engine was then safe in the hands of Watt, and Brindley had already turned into his own path as the author of our English canal system.

The young Duke of Bridgewater, vexed in love by the frailty of fair women, had adjured interest in their sex, had gone down to his estate of Worsley, on the borders of Chat Moss, and, to give himself something more wholesome to think about than the sisters Gunning and their fortunes, conferred with John Gilbert, his laud steward, as to the possibility of cutting a canal by which the coals found upon his Worsley estate might be readily taken to market at Manchester. Manchester then was a rising town, of which the manufacturers were yet unaided by the steam-engine, and there was no coal smoke but that which arose from household fires. The roads out of Manchester were so bad as to be actually closed in winter, and in summer the coal, sold at the pit mouth by the horse-load, was conveyed on horses' backs at an addition to its cost of nine or ten shillings a ton.

When the duke discussed with Gilbert old abandoned and new possible schemes of water-conveyance for his Worsley coal, Gilbert advised the calling in of the ingenious James Brindley of Leek, "the Schemer." When the duke came into contact with Brindley, he at once put trust in him, and gave him the direction of the proposed work; whereupon he was requested to base his advice upon what he enters in his memorandum-book of jobs done as an "ochilor" (ocular) "servey of a riconi-tering."

Brindley examined the ground, and formed

his own plan. He was against carrying the canal down into the Irwell by a flight of locks, and so up again on the other side to the proposed level, but counselled carrying the canal by solid embankments and a stone aqueduct right over the river upon one level throughout. The duke accepted his opinion, and had plans prepared for a new application to parliament, Brindley often staying with him at work and in consultation for weeks together, while still travelling to and fro in full employment upon mills, water-wheels, cranes, fire-engines, and other mechanical work. Small as his pay was, he lived frugally. He had by this time even saved a little money, and gained credit enough to be able, by borrowing from a friend at Leek, to pay between five and six hundred pounds for a fourth share of an estate at Turnhurst, in Staffordshire, supposed by him to be full of minerals.

The Duke of Bridgewater obtained his act in the year seventeen 'sixty, but the bold and original part of Brindley's scheme, which many ridiculed as madness, caused the duke much anxiety. In England there had never been so great an aqueduct, but the scheme was not only for the carrying of water in a water-tight trunk of earth over an embankment, but also for the carrying of ships on a bridge of water over water. Brindley had no misgivings. To allay the duke's fears, he suggested calling in and questioning another engineer, who surprised the man of genius by ending an adverse report thus: "I have often heard of castles in the air; but never before saw where any of them were to be erected."

The duke, however, with all his hesitation, had most faith in the head of James Brindley, bade him go on in his own way, and resolved to run the risk of failure. And so, on a bridge of three arches, the canal was carried over the Irwell by the Barton aqueduct, thirty-nine feet above the river. The water was confined within a puddled channel to prevent leakage, and the work is at this day as sound as it was when first constructed. For the safe carrying of water along the top of an earthen embankment Brindley had relied upon the retaining power of clay puddle. It was by help also of clay puddle that he carried the weight of the embankment safe over the ooze of Trafford Moss.

With great ingenuity, also, Brindley provided for the crossing of his canal by streams intercepting its course, without breach of his rule that it is unsafe to let such waters freely mix with the canal stream. Thus, to provide for the free passage of the Medlock without causing a rush into the canal, an ingenious form of weir was contrived over which its waters flowed into a lower level, and thence down a well several yards deep, leading to a subterranean passage by which the stream was passed into the Irwell, near at hand. Arthur Young, who saw Brindley's canal soon after it was opened, said that "the whole plan of these works shows a capacity and extent of mind which foresees difficulties, and invents remedies in anticipation of possible evils."

The connexion and dependence of the parts upon each other are happily imagined; and all are exerted in concert, to command by every means the wished-for success." At the Worsley and Brindley constructed a basin, into which coal was brought from different workings of the mine by a subterranean water-channel. Brindley also invented cranes for the more ready loading of the boats, laid down within the mines a system of underground railways leading from the face of the coal where the miners worked to the wells that he had made at different points in the tunnels for shooting the coal down into the boats waiting below. He drained and ventilated with a water-bellows the lower parts of the mine. He improved the barges, invented water-weights, raising dams, riddles to wash the coal for the forges. At the Manchester end Brindley made equally ingenious arrangements for the easy delivery of the coal at the top of Castle Hill. At every turn in the work his inventive genius was felt. When the want of lime for the masonry was a serious impediment, Brindley discovered how to make of a useless unadhesive lime-marl, by tempering it and casting it in moulds before burning, an excellent lime, a contrivance that alone saved the duke several thousand of pounds cost. When the water was let in, and the works everywhere stood firm, people of fashion flocked to see Brindley's canal as "perhaps the greatest artificial curiosity in the world;" and writers spoke in glowing terms of the surprise with which they saw several barges of great burthen drawn by a single mule or horse along "a river hung in the air," over another river flowing beneath.

As for Manchester, with the price of coal reduced one half, it was ready to make the best use of the steam-engine when it was established as the motive power in our factories.

Within two months of the day, seventeenth of July, seventeen 'sixty-one, when the first boat-load of coals travelled over the Barton viaduct, Brindley's notes testify that he was at Liverpool "roconitoring," and by the end of September he was levelling for a proposed extension of his canal from Manchester to Liverpool by joining it to the Mersey eight miles below Warrington Bridge, whence there is a natural tideway to Liverpool, about fifteen miles distant. At that time there was not even a coach-communication over the bad roads between Manchester and Liverpool, the first stage-coach having been started six years later, when it required six, and sometimes eight, horses to pull it the thirty miles along the ruts and through the sloughs. The coach started from Liverpool early in the morning, breakfasted at Prescott, dined at Warrington, and reached Manchester by supper-time. From Manchester to Liverpool it made the return journey next day. The Duke of Bridgewater's proposed canal was strongly opposed as an antagonist interest by the Mersey and Irwell Navigation Company. The canal promised to take freights at half the price charged by the Navigation Company. A son of the Earl of Derby took the part of the "Old Na-

vigators," and as the Duke of Bridgewater was a Whig, Brindley had to enter in his note-book that "the Toores" (Tories) "mad had" (made head) "agane ye Duk." But at last his entry was

"ad a grate Division of 127 fort Duk
98 nos

for t^e Duk 29 Mr Jorete."

and the Duke's cause prospered during the rest of the contest.

Brindley bought a new suit of clothes to grace his part as principal engineering witness for the canal, and having upset his mind for some days by going to see Garrick play Richard the Third (wherefore he declared against all further indulgence in that sort of excitement), he went to the committee-room duly provided with a bit of chalk in his pocket, and made good the saying that originated from his clear way of showing what he meant upon the floor of the committee-room, that "Brindley and chalk would go through the world." When asked to produce a drawing of a proposed bridge, he said he had none, but could immediately get a model. Whereupon he went out and bought a large cheese, which he brought into the committee-room and cut into two equal parts, saying, "Here is my model." The two halves of the cheese represented the two arches of his bridge, the rest of the work connected with them he built with paper, with books, or with whatever he found ready to hand. Once when he had repeatedly talked about "puddling," some of the members wished to know what puddling was. Brindley sent out for a lump of clay, hollowed it into a trough, poured water in, and showed that it leaked out. Then he worked up the clay with water, going through the process of puddling in miniature, again made a trough of the puddled clay, filled it with water, and showed that it was water-tight. "Thus it is," he said, "that I form a water-tight trunk to carry water over rivers and valleys, wherever they cross the path of the canal."

And so the battle was fought, and the canal works completed at a total cost of two hundred and twenty thousand pounds, of which Brindley was content to take as his share a rate of pay below that of an ordinary mechanic at the present day. The canal yielded an income which eventually reached eighty thousand pounds a year; but three and sixpence a day, and for a greater part of the time half-a-crown a day, was the salary of the man of genius by whom it was planned and executed. Yet Brindley was then able to get a guinea a day for services to others, though from the Duke of Bridgewater he never took more than a guinea a week, and had not always that. The duke was investing all the money he could raise, and sometimes at his wits' end for means to go on with the work. Brindley gave his soul to the work for its own sake, and if he had a few pence to buy himself his dinner with one day he enters only "ating and drinking 6d."—he could live content with having added not a straw's weight of impedi-

ment to the great enterprise he was bent with all the force of his great genius upon achieving. It gave him the advantage, also, of being able, as was most convenient, to treat with the duke on equal terms. He was invited as a canal maker to Hesse by offers of any payment he chose to demand, but stuck to the duke, who is said even to have been in debt to him for travelling and other expenses, which he had left unpaid with the answer, "I am much more distressed for money than you; however, as soon as I can recover myself, your services shall not go unrewarded." After Brindley's sudden death his widow applied in vain for sums which she said were due to her late husband.

The Staffordshire Grand Trunk Canal, Brindley's other great work, started from the duke's canal near Runcorn, passed through the salt-making districts of Cheshire and the Pottery district, to unite the Severn with the Mersey by one hundred and forty miles of water-way. This canal went through five tunnels, one of them, that at Harecastle, being nearly three thousand yards long, a feature in the scheme accounted by many to be as preposterous as they had called his former "castle in the air." The work was done; bringing with it traffic, population, and prosperity into many half-savage midland districts. It gave comfort and ample employment in the Pottery district, while trebling the numbers of those whom it converted from a half-employed and ill-paid set of savages into a thriving community.

Once, when Brindley was demonstrating to a committee of the House of Commons the superior reliableness and convenience of equable canals as compared with rivers, liable to every mischance of flood and drought, he was asked by a member, "What, then, he took to be the use of navigable rivers?" and replied, "To make canal navigations, to be sure." From the Grand Trunk, other canals branched, and yet others were laid out by Brindley before he died. He found time when at the age of fifty to marry a girl of nineteen, and the house then falling vacant on the estate at Turnhurst, of which he had, for the sake of its minerals, bought a fourth share, and by that time had a colliery at work, he took his wife home as the mistress of that old roomy dwelling. He was receiving better pay then as the engineer of the Grand Trunk Canal, and his new home was conveniently near to the workings of its great Harecastle Tunnel, into which he and his partners sent a short branch canal—of a mile and a half long—from their coal mine, which was only a few fields distant from his house.

Water that made his greatness was at last the death of Brindley. He got drenched one day while surveying a canal, went about in his wet clothes, and when he went to bed at the inn was put between damp sheets. This produced the illness of which he died at the age of fifty-six. It was not the first time that he had taken to his bed. Scarcely able to read, and if he could have read, engaged on work so new that no book precedents could have helped him,

whenever Brindley had some difficulty to overcome that seemed for a time insuperable, he went to bed upon it, and is known to have stopped in bed two or three days till he had quietly thought it all over and worked his way to the solution. It is said that when he lay on his death-bed some eager canal undertakers urged to see him and seek from him the solution of a problem. They had met with a serious difficulty in the course of their canal, and must see Mr. Brindley and get his advice. They were admitted, and told him how at a certain place they had laboured in vain to prevent their canal from leaking. "Then puddle it," murmured Brindley. "Sir, but we *have* puddled it." "Then"—and they were almost his last words in life—"puddle it again—and again." As he had wisely invested his savings in Grand Trunk shares, they and his share in the colliery enabled him to leave ample provision for his widow and two daughters.

As for the canal system that he established, it has not been made obsolete by its strong younger brother the railway system. The Duke's Canal is as busy as ever. Not less than twenty million tons of traffic are at this date carried yearly upon the canals of England alone, and this quantity is steadily increasing.

We have taken the facts in this account of Brindley from a delightful popular edition of that part of Mr. Smiles's *Lives of the Engineers* which tells of him and of the earlier water engineers. Of Mr. Smiles's *Lives of George and Robert Stephenson* there is a popular edition as a companion volume, and therein all may read, worthily told, the tale of the foundation and of the chief triumphs of that new form of engineering which dealt with water, not by the river-full but by the bucket-full, and made a few buckets of water strong as a river to sweep men and their goods and their cattle in a mighty torrent from one corner of the country to another.

IN AND ON AN OMNIBUS.

I SUPPOSE—the lamentable failure of his tercentenary notwithstanding—it will be considered creditable to have shared a few thoughts with the late Shakespeare. On more than one occasion I have detected myself uttering sentiments which were identical with some enunciated by that bard, differing merely in the language in which they were expressed, as might be expected when it is considered that the late Shakespeare was a poetical party: while I pride myself on being an eminently practical man. Besides, if I may so say, my illustrations have been brought down to the present time, and are impregnated with the terse wit and playful symbolical humour of the day, whereas our friend S.'s age, to say the truth, somewhat roccoco and old-fashioned. You will see what I mean when I quote one of my last, a saying which was hailed with immense delight at our club, *The Odd Tricks*, on Saturday: "All the

world's an omnibus!" I am aware that S. has the same idea with regard to "a stage," but stages do not run now, whatever they might in S.'s time, and besides, an omnibus gives greater variety.

I have been an omnibus rider all my life. To be sure, I went to school in a hackney-coach, falling on my knees in the straw at the bottom, I remember, as the wretched horses stumbled up Highgate Hill, and imploring a maiden aunt, who was my conductor, to take me back—on the sacrifice of two bright half-crowns, which I had received as a parting tip, and a new pair of Wellington boots. But when I "left," I came away in an omnibus, and at once began my omnibus experiences. I lived then with my mother, at Beaver Cottage, Hammersmith New Road, and I used to go up every morning to the Rivet and Trivet Office, Somerset House, in the nine o'clock omnibus, every seat of which was regularly bespoken, while the conductor summoned his passengers by wild blasts upon a horn, as the vehicle approached their doors. That was two-and-twenty years ago. Every rider in the nine o'clock omnibus, save the junior clerk in the Rivet and Trivet department, has taken his final ride in a vehicle of much the same shape, but of a more sombre colour, and carrying only one inside; and I, that identical junior, some years retired from the service on a little pension and a little something of my own, trying to kill time as best I may, find no pursuit more amusing than riding about in the different omnibuses, and speculating on the people I meet therein.

I am bound to say that in many respects the omnibuses and their men are greatly improved during my experience. The thirteenth seat, that awful position with your back to the horses and your face to the door, where, in a Mahomet's coffin-like attitude, you rested on nothing, and had to contemplate your own legs calmly floating before you, very little below the faces of your right and left hand neighbours, has been abolished; a piece of cocoa-nut matting is generally substituted for that dank straw which smelt so horribly and clung to your boots with such vicious perseverance; most of the windows are, what is termed in stage-language, practicable, and can be moved at pleasure; and a system of ventilation in the roof is now the rule, instead of, as in my early days, the singular exception. Thirdly, by the salutary rule of the General Omnibus Company, aided by the sharp notice which the magistrates take of any impropriety, the omnibus servants, the coachmen and conductors, from insolent blackguards have become, for the most part, civil and intelligent men, while the whole "service"—horses, harness, food, &c.—has been placed on a greatly improved footing. But my experience teaches me that the omnibus-riders are very much of the same type as even I still find the pleasant placid little elderly gentleman who sits on the right hand by the door, who always has an umbrella with a carved ivory tip, and always wears a plaid shirt-frill, full grey trousers, rather short and

showing a bit of the leg of his Wellington boots; who carries a brown snuff-box like a bit of mottled soap; who hands everybody into the omnibus, and who is particular in pushing down and sending quickly after their wearers, the exuberant crinolines of the ladies. It is he who always starts subscriptions among the "regulars" for the Lancashire distress, or the frozen-out operatives, or for the widow of some stable-helper who was killed by a kicking horse, or for the crippled crossing-sweeper who was knocked down by the Hansom cab. It was he who, when Stunning Joe, our "express" nine A.M. coachman, was pitched off his box going sharp round the corner of Pineapple-place, and upset us all—we were not hurt, but Joe smashed his collar-bone and his right arm, and was not expected to live—it was our pleasant-faced little friend who used to go every day to the hospital, made interest, and got himself admitted, and took Joe a thousand little comforts, and sat by his bedside and read to him by the hour together—not forgetting, when Joe grew convalescent, to put three sovereigns into his hand, and tell him to go and set himself thoroughly right by a fortnight's stay at the sea-side. The omnibus calls for him regularly, but long before it arrives he has walked down to the end of the crescent where he lives, with two or three of his grandchildren, who all insist on being kissed before they allow him to start, while their mother, his daughter, seldom omits to wave her farewell from the dining-room window. He takes six weeks' holiday in the autumn, when it is understood that he is away at the sea-side with his family; but at no other time does he omit riding to and from town in the omnibus, save on Christmas-eve, when, in consideration of certain trifling purchases he has made—among them a huge Leadenhall Market turkey, a large slice out of Fortnum and Mason's shop, and half the Lowther Arcade store of toys—he charters a cab, and freights it for the return journey with the precious produce.

I still find the old gentleman who sits on the left side of the door, and whose hands are always clasped on the top of his stick; the old gentleman with a face like a withered apple, with the high stiff-starched cross-barred check neckerchief, the close napped curly brimmed hat, the beaver gloves, the pepper-and-salt trousers, the drab gaiters and boots. He never helps anybody in or out, and scowls if he be accidentally touched; when the women's crinolines scrape his legs as their wearers pass him, he growls "Yar!" and prods at them with his stick; he knows the sensitive part of the conductor's anatomy, and pokes him viciously therein when people want the omnibus to be stopped; he raps the fingers of the little boys who spring on the step proffering newspapers; he checks the time of the journey by a large white-faced gold watch, which he compares with every church clock on the road; he tells women to get their money ready; he shakes his stick in a very terrifying and Gogmagogish manner at crying children. He never will have the window open on the hottest summer day;

and he refuses to alight, if there be any mud, unless he is deposited close by the kerb-stone, no matter if the City crush is at its height, and the omnibus has to be steered through an opposing procession of Pickfords. He is the great delight of the knifeboard "regulars," who never omit to send a puff of tobacco-smoke (which he detests) into his face as they mount to their elevated berths; who call him "The Dry Fish;" who declare that, instead of washing, he rasps himself, as a baker does rolls; who vow, when the omnibus goes over any rough bit of road, that they hear his heart rattling inside him like a pebble; who send him by the conductor the most tremendous messages, which that functionary enormously enjoys, but never delivers.

The Feebles, who are the constant supporters of omnibuses, still remain in all their forcible feebleness. They are of both sexes, the female perhaps predominating. They never know whether the omnibus is outward or homeward bound, and, having got in at Charing-cross, begin, when we arrive at Turnham-green, to express their wonder "when we shall come to the Bank." They never can recollect the name of the street at which they are to be set down. "Deary me, Newland-street—no, not Newland, some name just like Newland—Archer-street, I think, or terrace; don't you know it? Mrs. Blethers lives at Number Seven!" If by chance they do know the name of their destination, they mention it to the conductor when they get in, and then for the whole remainder of the seven-mile journey, whenever the vehicle stops, they bounce up from their seats, mutter "Is *this* Belinda-grove?" stagger over the feet of their fellow-passengers until they reach the door, where they are wildly repulsed, and fall back until they are jolted by the motion of the omnibus into a seat. The women carry their money either in damp smeary colourless kid gloves, round the palms of which they roke with their forefinger for a sixpence, as a snuff connoisseur will round his box for the last few grains of Prince's Mixture; or, they carry it in a mysterious appendage called a pocket: not a portion of the dress, but, so far as I can make out from cursory observation, a kind of linen wallet suspended from the waist, to reach which causes a great deal of muscular exertion, and not a small display of under garment. It is scarcely necessary to say that the Feebles never know the fare, that they always want change for a sovereign—fourpence to be deducted—that they constantly think the omnibus is going to be upset, or that the horses have run away; that they always interrupt testy old gentlemen deep in their newspapers by asking them whether there is any news; and that they are in omnibuses, as they are in life, far more obstructive and disagreeable than the most wrong-headed and bumptious.

When a child in an omnibus is good, you hate it; what can you do when it is bad? When it is good, it kneels on the seat with its face to the window, and with its muddy boots, now on the lap of its next, now against the knees of its opposite, neighbour. It drums upon the glass with its fist, it rubs the glass with its nose.

When it is bad, if it be very young, from under its ribboned cap, fiercely cocked on one side, it glares at you with a baleful eye, and dribbles as in mockery, with one mottled arm up to the elbow in its mouth. If it be "getting on" and older, it commences to swing its legs like two clock pendulums, with a regular motion, increasing in vigour until one of its feet catches you on the shin, when it is "fetched-up" short, by a sharp prod in the side from its attendant sprite, and is put as a punishment to "stand down." Then it deposits itself on your toes, and thence commences the ascent of your leg, taking your instep as its Grands Mulets, or resting-place.

Among the general characteristics of "insides," I need scarcely point out a feeling inducing those already in possession to regard every new comer with loathing, to decline tendering the least assistance, to close up their ranks as earnestly as the Scottish spearmen did at Flodden Field, "each stepping where his comrade stood," and to leave the new arrival to grope his way through a thick brushwood of knees, crinolines, and umbrellas, to the end of the omnibus, where he finally inserts as much of himself as he can between the wood-work and his next neighbour's shoulder, and leaves his ultimate position to Time the Avenger. It is also an infallible and rigorously observed rule that, if two people meeting in an omnibus know each other and speak, all the other people in the omnibus endeavour to listen to what those two are saying—also, that all the other people pretend that they are not listening or paying the least attention to the conversation. Further, it is necessary that whenever a stout person is seen blocking out the daylight in the doorway, each side having the same complement of passengers, all should begin to assume a defiant air, and get close together and play that game known among children as "no child of mine," or to treat the new comer as a kind of shuttlecock, tossing him from one to the other until an accidental jolt decides his fate.

The "outsides" are a very different class. Women are never seen there, save when an occasional maid-servant going into the country for a holiday, climbs up beside the coachman: who, though he greatly enjoys her company, becomes the object of much ribald chaff among his associates. Passing him on the road, they inquire "when it's a comin' off?" if he be unmarried, or, if he be in a state of connubial bliss, threaten to "tell the missis." But the "outsides" are, for the most part, young men of fast tendencies, who always make a point of ascending and descending while the omnibus is at its swiftest, and who would be degraded and disgusted if the driver slackened his pace to accommodate them. Some of them are very young-looking indeed, and but one remove from schoolboys; and these, I notice, feel bound to suck wooden or meerschaum pipes, and to talk of their exploits of the previous evening. With them, the conductor, always known by his christian name, is on the pleasantest terms, occasionally being admitted to the friendly game

of pool, at the tavern where the journey terminates. They know all the other omnibus servants on the road, who touch their hats as they pass, and they maintain a constant conversation about them in a low growling tone: As—"Old Harry's late again this morning!" "Little Bill's still driving that blind 'un, I see!" and so forth.

Most of these young fellows have their regular booked seats, for which they pay weekly, whether they occupy them or no; and for a stranger to get up amongst them is as bad as if he were accidentally to penetrate into the sacred precincts of the Stock Exchange.

THE NICK OF TIME.

LET us suppose a case that might occur if it has not occurred.

John Mullet, immersed (say) in the button trade at Birmingham, has made money in business. He bequeaths his property by will, and is in due time gathered to his fathers. His two sons, Jasper and Josiah, take certain portions; and other portions are to go either to the family of Jasper or to that of Josiah, according as either one of those brothers survives the other. Jasper remains in England; but Josiah goes out to Australia, to establish something that may make his children great people over there. Both brothers, twelve thousand miles apart, die on the same day, May 1st, one at noon (Greenwich time), the other at noon (Sydney time). Jasper's children have been on pleasant cousinly terms with Josiah's; but they are aware of the fact that it would be better for them that Josiah should die before their own father, Jasper. Josiah's children, on the other hand, be they few or many, although they always liked Uncle Jasper, cannot and do not ignore the fact that their interests would be better served by the survivorship of Josiah than that of Jasper. The two sets of cousins, therefore, plunge into a contest, to decide the question of survivorship between the two sons of old John Mullet.

This is one variety of a problem which the courts of Law and Equity are often called upon to settle. Occasionally the question refers to two persons who die at the same time, and in each other's company. For instance: Towards the close of the last century, George Netherwood, his children by his first wife, his second wife, and her son, were all wrecked during a voyage from Jamaica to England. Eight thousand pounds were left by will, in such a way that the relations of the two wives were greatly interested in knowing whether the second Mrs. Netherwood did or did not survive her husband, even by one single minute—a matter which, of course, could not be absolutely proved. Again, in eighteen hundred and six, Mr. Mason and one son were drowned at sea; his remaining eight children went to law, some of them against the others; because, if the father died before the son, five thousand pounds would be divided equally among the other eight children; whereas, if the son died before the father, the brothers only would get it, the sisters being shut out. A

few years afterwards Job Taylor and his wife were lost in a ship wrecked at sea; they had not much to leave behind them; but what little there was, was made less by the struggles of two sets of relatives, each striving to show that one or other of the two hapless persons *might* possibly have survived the other by a few minutes. In eighteen hundred and nineteen Major Colclough, his wife, and four children, were drowned during a voyage from Bristol to ~~Cork~~: the husband and wife had both made wills; and there arose a pretty picking for the lawyers in relation to survivorships and next of kin, and trying to prove whether the husband died first, the wife first, or both together. Two brothers, James and Charles Corbet, left Demerara on a certain day in eighteen hundred and twenty-eight, in a vessel of which one was master and the other mate; the vessel was seen five days afterwards, but from that time no news of her fate was ever received. Their father died about a month after the vessel was last seen. The ultimate disposal of his property depended very much on the question whether he survived his two sons, or they survived him. Many curious arguments were used in court. Two or three captains stated that from August to January are hurricane months in the West Indian seas, and that the ship was very likely to have been wrecked quite early in her voyage. There were, in addition, certain relations interested in James's dying before Charles; and they urged that, if the ship was wrecked, Charles was likely to have outlived by a little space his brother James, because he was a stronger and more experienced man. Alas for the "glorious uncertainty!" One big-wig decided that the sons survived the father, and another that the father survived the sons. About the beginning of the present reign, three persons, father, mother, and child, were drowned on a voyage from Dublin to Quebec; the husband had made a will, leaving all his property to his wife; hence arose a contest between the next of kin and the wife's relations, each catching at any small fact that would (theoretically) keep one poor soul alive a few minutes longer than the other. About ten years ago, a gentleman embarked with his wife and three children for Australia: the ship was lost soon after leaving England; the mate, the only person who was saved among the whole of the crew and passengers, deposed that he saw the hapless husband and wife locked in each other's arms at the moment when the waves closed over them. There would seem to be no question of survivorship here; yet a question really arose; for there were two wills to be proved, the terms of which would render the relatives much interested in knowing whether husband or wife did really survive the other by ever so small a portion of time.

These entangled contests may rest in peace, so far as the actual decisions are concerned. And so may others of a somewhat analogous nature. Such, for instance, as the case of an old lady and her housekeeper at Portsmouth; they were both murdered one night; the lady had

willed all her property to the housekeeper; and then the lawyers fought over the question as to which of the women died first. Or, the case of a husband who promised, on his marriage-day, to settle twelve hundred pounds on his wife "in three or four years;" they were both drowned about three years after the marriage; and it was not until after a tough struggle in Chancery that the husband's relatives conquered those of the wife—albeit, the money had nearly vanished in law expenses by that time. Or, the case of a man, who gave a power of attorney to sell some property; the property was sold on the eighth of June; but the man was never seen after the eighth of the preceding March, and was supposed to have been wrecked at sea; hence arose a question whether the man was, or was not, dead on the day when the property was sold—a question in which the buyer was directly interested. The decisions in these particular cases we pass over; but it is curious to see how the law sometimes tries to *guess* at the nick of time in which either one of two persons dies. Sometimes the onus of proof rests on one of the two sets of relations; if they cannot prove a survivorship, the judgment is that the deaths were simultaneous. Sometimes the law philosophises on vitality and decay. The Code Napoleon lays down the principle that of two persons who perish by the same calamity, if they were both children, the elder probably survived the younger by a brief space, on account of having superior vital energy; whereas, if they were elderly people, the younger probably survived the elder. The code also takes anatomy and physiology into account, and discourses on the probability whether a man would, or would not, float longer alive than a woman, in the event of shipwreck. The English law is less precise in this matter; it is more prone to infer simultaneous death, unless proof of survivorship be actually brought forward. Counsel, of course, do not fail to make the best of any straw to catch at. According to the circumstances of the case, they argue that a man, being usually stronger than a woman, probably survives her a little, in a case of simultaneous drowning; that, irrespective of comparative strength, her greater terror and timidity would incapacitate her from making exertions which would be possible to him; that a seafaring man has a chance of surviving a landsman, on account of his experience in salt-water matters; that where there is no evidence to the contrary, a child may be presumed to have outlived his father; that a man in good health would survive one in ill health; and so forth.

The nick of time is not less an important matter in reference to single deaths, under various circumstances. People are often very much interested in knowing whether a certain person is dead or not. Unless under specified circumstances, the law refuses to kill a man; that is, a man known to have been alive at a certain date is presumed to continue to live, unless and until proof to the contrary is adduced. But there are certain cases in which the application of this rule would involve

hardship. Many leases are dependent on lives; and both lessor and lessee are concerned in knowing whether a particular life has terminated or not. Many a married woman, who has neither heard nor seen anything of her husband for a long series of years (vide Tennyson's gentle Annie, the wife of poor Enoch Arden), would be induced to marry again, if quite certain that he (the first husband) was dead. Therefore, special statutes have been passed, in relation to a limited number of circumstances, enacting that if a man were seen alive more than seven years ago, and has not since been seen or heard of, he may be treated as dead. (Philip and Annie both knew that Enoch had been away more than seven years.)

The nick of time occasionally affects the distribution or amount of property in relation to particular seasons. Some years ago the newspapers remarked on the fact that a lord of broad acres, whose rent-roll reached something like forty thousand a year, died "about midnight" between the tenth and eleventh of October; and the possible consequences of this were thus set forth. "His rents are payable at 'old time,' that is, Old Lady Day and Old Michaelmas Day. Old Michaelmas Day fell this year on Sunday, the eleventh instant. The day begins at midnight. Now, the rent is due upon the first moment of the day it becomes due; so that at one second beyond twelve o'clock of the tenth instant, rent payable at Old Michaelmas Day is in law due. If the lord died before twelve, the rents belong to the parties taking the estates; but if after twelve, then they belong to and form part of his personal estate. The difference of one minute might thus involve a question on the title to about twenty thousand pounds." We do not know that a legal difficulty did arise; the facts only indicate the mode in which one might have arisen. Sometimes that ancient British institution, the house clock, has been at war with another British institution, the parish church clock. A baby was born, or an old person died, just before the house clock struck twelve on a particular night, but after the church clock struck. On which day did the birth or death take place—yesterday or to-day? And how would this fact be ascertained, to settle the inheritance of an estate? We know an instance (not involving, however, the inheritance to property) of a lady whose relations never have definitely known on which day she was born; the pocket watch of the accoucheur who attended her mother pointed to a little before twelve at midnight, whereas the church clock had just struck twelve. Of course a particular day had to be named in the register; and as the doctor maintained that his watch was right, there were the materials for a very pretty quarrel if the parties concerned had been so disposed. It might be that the nick of time was midnight exactly, as measured by solar or sundial time: that is, the sun may have been precisely in the nadir at that moment; but this difficulty would not arise in practice, as the law knows only mean time, not sun-dial time. If Greenwich time were made legal

everywhere, and if electric clocks everywhere established communication with the master clock at the Observatory, there might be another test supplied; but under the conditions stated, it would be a nice matter of *Tweedledum* and *Tweedledee* to determine whether the house clock, the church clock, or a pocket watch, should be relied upon. All the pocket watches in the town might be brought into the witness-box, but without avail; for if some accorded with the house clock, others would surely be found to agree better with the church clock.

This question of clocks, as compared with time measured by the sun, presents some very curious aspects in relation to longitude. What's o'clock in London will not tell you what's o'clock at Falmouth, unless you know the difference of longitude between the two places. The sun takes about twenty minutes to go from the zenith of the one to the zenith of the other. Local time, the time at any particular town, is measured from the moment of noon at that town; and noon itself is when the sun comes to the meridian of that place. Hence Falmouth noon is twenty minutes after London noon, Falmouth midnight twenty minutes after London midnight; and so on. When it is ten minutes after midnight, on the morning of Sunday, the first of January, in London, it is ten minutes before midnight on Saturday, the thirty-first of December, at Falmouth. It is a Sabbath at the one place, a working-day at the other. That particular moment of absolute time is in the year eighteen hundred and sixty-five at the one, and eighteen hundred and sixty-four at the other. Therefore, we see, it might become a ticklish point in what year a man died, solely on account of this question of longitude, irrespective of any wrong-going or wrong-doing of clocks, or of any other doubtful points whatever. Sooner or later this question will have to be attended to. In all our chief towns, nearly all our towns indeed, the railway-station clocks mark Greenwich time, or, as it is called, "Railway time;" the church clocks generally mark local time; and some commercial clocks, to serve all parties, mark both kinds of time on the same dial-face, by the aid of an additional index hand. Railway time is gradually beating local time; and the law will by-and-by have to settle which shall be used as the standard in determining the moment of important events. Some of the steamers plying between England and Ireland use Greenwich time in notifying the departures from the English port, and Dublin time in notifying those from the Irish port: a method singularly embarrassing to a traveller who is in the habit of relying on his own watch.

Does a sailor get more prog, more grog, more pay, within a given space of absolute time when coming from America to England, or when going from England to America? The difference is far too slight to attract either his attention or that of his employers; yet it really is the case that he obtains more good things in the former of these cases than in the latter. His days are shorter on the homeward than on the outward voyage; and if he receive

so much provisions and pay per day, he interprets *day* as it is to him on shipboard. When in harbour, say at Liverpool, a day is, to him as to every one else who is stationary like himself, a period of definite length; but when he travels eastward or westward, his days are variable in length. When he travels west, he and the sun run a race: the sun of course beats; but the sailor accomplishes a little, and the sun has to fetch up that little before he can complete what foot-racers call a lap. In other words, there is a longer absolute time between noon and noon to the sailor going west, than to the sailor ashore. When he travels east, on the contrary, he and the sun run towards each other; inasmuch that there is less absolute time in the period between his Monday's noon and Tuesday's noon than when he was ashore. The ship's noon is usually dinner-time for the sailors; and the interval between that and the next noon (measured by the sun, not by the chronometer) varies in length through the causes just noticed. Once now and then there are facts recorded in the newspapers which bring this truth into prominence—a truth demonstrable enough in science, but not very familiar to the general public. When the Great Eastern made her first veritable voyage across the Atlantic, in June eighteen hundred and sixty, she left Southampton on the 17th, and reached New York on the 28th. As the ship was going west, more or less, all the while, she was going with or rather after the sun; the interval was greater between noon and noon than when the ship was anchored off Southampton; and the so-called eleven days of the voyage were eleven long days. As it was important, in reference to a problem in steam navigation, to know how many revolutions the paddles made in a given time, to test the power of the mighty ship, it was necessary to bear in mind that the ship's day was longer than a shore day; and it was found that, taking latitude and longitude into account, the day on which the greatest run was made was nearly twenty-four and a half hours long; the ship's day was equal to half an hour more than a landsman's day. The other days varied from twenty-four to twenty-four and a half. On the return voyage, all this was reversed; the ship met the sun, the days were less than twenty-four ordinary hours long, and the calculations had to be modified in consequence. The sailors, too, got more food in a homeward week than an outward week, owing to the intervals between the meals being shorter—albeit, their appetites may not have been cognisant of the difference.

And this brings us back to our hypothetical Mulletts. Josiah died at noon (Sydney time), and Jasper died on the same day at noon (Greenwich time). Which died first? Sydney, although not quite at the other side of the world, is nearly so; it is ten hours of longitude east-

ward of Greenwich; the sun rises there ten hours earlier than with us. It is nearly bed-time with Sydney folks when our artisans strike work for dinner. There would therefore be a reasonable ground for saying that Josiah died first. But had it been New Zealand, a curious question might arise. Otago, and some other of the settlements in those islands, are so near the antipodes of Greenwich, that they may either be called eleven and three-quarter hours east, or twelve and a quarter hours west, of Greenwich, according as we suppose the navigator to go round the Cape of Good Hope or round Cape Horn. At six in the morning in London, it is about six in the evening at New Zealand. But of which day? When it is Monday morning in London, is it Sunday evening or Monday evening in New Zealand? This question is not so easy to solve as might be supposed. When a ship called at Pitcairn Island several years ago, to visit the singular little community that had descended from the mutineers of the *Bounty*, the captain was surprised to find exactly one day difference between his ship's reckoning and that of the islanders; what was Monday, the 26th, to the one, was Tuesday, the 27th, to the other. A voyage east had been the origin of one reckoning, a voyage west that of the other. Not unlikely we should have to go back to the voyage of the *Bounty* itself, seventy-seven years ago, to get to the real origin of the Pitcairners' reckoning. How it may be with the English settlers in New Zealand, we feel by no means certain. If the present reckoning began with some voyage made round Cape Horn, then our Monday morning is New Zealand Sunday evening; but if with some voyage made round the Cape of Good Hope, then our Monday morning is New Zealand Monday evening. Probabilities are perhaps in favour of the latter supposition. We need not ask "What's o'clock at New Zealand?" for that can be ascertained to a minute, by counting the difference of longitude; but to ask "What day of the week and of the month is it at New Zealand?" is a question that might, for aught we can see, involve very important legal consequences. Are our judicial functionaries quite sure how they would settle it?

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I.

MRS. LIRRIPER RELATES HOW SHE WENT ON, AND WENT OVER.

AH! It's pleasant to drop into my own easy-chair my dear though a little palpitating what with trotting up-stairs and what with trotting down, and why kitchen-stairs should all be corner stairs is for the builders to justify though I do not think they fully understand their trade and never did, else why the sameness and why not more conveniences and fewer draughts and likewise making a practice of laying the plaster on too thick I am well convinced which holds the damp, and as to chimney-pots putting them on by guess-work like hats at a party and no more knowing what their effect will be upon the smoke bless you than I do if so much, except that it will mostly be either to send it down your throat in a straight form or give it a twist before it goes there. And what I says speaking as I find of those new metal chimneys all manner of shapes (there's a row of 'em at Miss Wozenham's lodging-house lower down on the other side of the way) is that they only work your smoke into artificial patterns for you before you swallow it and that I'd quite as soon swallow mine plain, the flavour being the same, not to mention the conceit of putting up signs on the top of your house to show the forms in which you take your smoke into your inside.

Being here before your eyes my dear in my own easy-chair in my own quiet room in my own Lodging House Number Eighty-one Norfolk-street Strand London situated midway between the City and St. James's—if anything is where it used to be with these hotels calling themselves Limited but called Unlimited by Major Jackman rising up everywhere and rising up into flagstaffs where they can't go any higher, but my mind of those monsters is give me a landlord's or landlady's wholesome face when I come off a journey and not a brass plate with an

electrified number clicking out of it which it's not in nature can be glad to see me and to which I don't want to be hoisted like molasses at the Docks and left there telegraphing for help with the most ingenious instruments but quite in vain—being here my dear I have no call to mention that I am still in the Lodgings as a business hoping to die in the same and if agreeable to the clergy partly read over at Saint Clement's Danes and concluded in Hatfield churchyard when lying once again by my poor Lirriper ashes to ashes and dust to dust.

Neither should I tell you any news my dear in telling you that the Major is still a fixture in the Parlours quite as much so as the roof of the house, and that Jemmy is of boys the best and brightest and has ever had kept from him the cruel story of his poor pretty young mother Mrs. Edson being deserted in the second floor and dying in my arms, fully believing that I am his born Gran and him an orphan, though what with engineering since he took a taste for it and him and the Major making Locomotives out of paravols broken iron pots and cotton-reels and them absolutely a getting off the line and falling over the table and injuring the passengers almost equal to the originals it really is quite wonderful. And when I says to the Major, "Major can't you by any means give us a communication with the guard?" the Major says quite huffy, "No madam it's not to be done," and when I says "Why not?" the Major says, "That is between us who are in the Railway Interest madam and our friend the Right Honourable Vice-President of the Board of Trade" and if you'll believe me my dear the Major wrote to Jemmy at school to consult him on the answer I should have before I could get even that amount of unsatisfactoriness out of the man, the reason being that when we first began with the little model and the working signals beautiful and perfect (being in general as wrong as the real) and when I says laughing "What

appointment am I to hold in this undertaking gentlemen?" Jemmy hugs me round the neck and tells me dancing, "You shall be the Public Grak" and consequently they put upon me just as much as ever they like and I sit a growling in my easy-chair.

My dear whether it is that a grown man as clever as the Major cannot give half his heart and mind to anything—even a plaything—but must get into right down earnest with it, whether it is so or whether it is not so I do not undertake to say, but Jemmy is far outdone by the serious and believing ways of the Major in the management of the United Grand Junction Lirriper and Jackman Great Norfolk Parlour Line, "For" says my Jemmy with the sparkling eyes when it was christened, "we must have a whole mouthful of name Gran or our dear old Public" and there the young rogue kissed me, "won't stump up." So the Public took the shares—ten at ninepence, and immediately when that was spent twelve Preference at one-and-sixpence—and they were all signed by Jemmy and countersigned by the Major, and between ourselves much better worth the money than some shares I have paid for in my time. In the same holidays the line was made and worked and opened and ran excursions and had collisions and burst its boilers and all sorts of accidents and offences all most regular correct and pretty. The sense of responsibility entertained by the Major as a military style of station-master my dear starting the down train behind time and ringing one of those little bells that you buy with the little coal-scuttles off the tray round the man's neck in the street did him honour, but noticing the Major of a night when he is writing out his monthly report to Jemmy at school of the state of the Rolling Stock and the Permanent Way and all the rest of it (the whole kept upon the Major's sideboard and dusted with his own hands every morning before varnishing his boots) I notice him as full of thought and care as full can be and frowning in a fearful manner, but indeed the Major does nothing by halves as witness his great delight in going out surveying with Jemmy when he has Jemmy to go with, carrying a chain and a measuring tape and driving I don't know what improvements right through Westminster Abbey and fully believed in the streets to be knocking everything upside down by Act of Parliament. As please Heaven will come to pass when Jemmy takes to that as a profession!

Mentioning my poor Lirriper brings into my head his own youngest brother the Doctor though Doctor of what I am sure it would be hard to say unless Liquor, for neither Physic nor Music nor yet Law does Joshua Lirriper know a morsel of except continually being summoned to the County Court and having orders made upon him which he runs away from, and once was taken in the passage of this very house with an umbrella up and the Major's hat on, giving his name with the door-mat round him as Sir Johnson Jones K.C.B. in spectacles residing at the Horse Guards. On which occasion he had got into the house not a minute before, through the girl letting him on to the mat when he sent in a piece

of paper twisted more like one of those spills for lighting candles than a note, offering me the choice between thirty shillings in hand and his brains on the premises marked immediate and waiting for an answer. My dear it gave me such a dreadful turn to think of the brains of my poor dear Lirriper's own flesh and blood flying about the new oilcloth however unworthy to be so assisted, that I went out of my room here to ask him what he would take once for all not to do it for life when I found him in the custody of two gentlemen that I should have judged to be in the feather-bed trade if they had not announced the law, so fluffy were their personal appearance. "Bring your chains sir," says Joshua to the littlest of the two in the biggest hat, "rivet on my fetters!" Imagine my feelings when I pictured him clanking up Norfolk-street in irons and Miss Wozenham looking out of window! "Gentlemen" I says all of a tremble and ready to drop "please to bring him into Major Jackman's apartments." So they brought him into the Parlours, and when the Major spies his own curly-brimmed hat on him which Joshua Lirriper had whipped off its peg in the passage for a military disguise he goes into such a tearing passion that he tips it off his head with his hand and kicks it up to the ceiling with his foot where it grazed long afterwards. "Major" I says "be cool and advise me what to do with Joshua my dead and gone Lirriper's own youngest brother." "Madam" says the Major "my advice is that you board and lodge him in a Powder Mill, with a handsome gratuity to the proprietor when exploded." "Major" I says "as a Christian you cannot mean your words." "Madam" says the Major "by the Lord I do!" and indeed the Major besides being with all his merits a very passionate man for his size had a bad opinion of Joshua on account of former troubles even unattended by liberties taken with his apparel. When Joshua Lirriper hears this conversation betwixt us he turns upon the littlest one with the biggest hat and says "Come sir! Remove me to my vile dungeon. Where is my mouldy straw!" My dear at the piteer of him rising in my mind dressed almost entirely in padlocks like Baron Trenck in Jemmy's book I was so overcome that I burst into tears and I says to the Major, "Major take my keys and settle with these gentlemen or I shall never know a happy minute more," which was done several times both before and since, but still I must remember that Joshua Lirriper has his good feelings and shows them in being always so troubled in his mind when he cannot wear mourning for his brother. Many a long year have I left off my widow's mourning not being wishful to intrude, but the tender point in Joshua that I cannot help a little yielding to is when he writes "One single sovereign would enable me to wear a decent suit of mourning for my much-loved brother. I vowed at the time of his lamented death that I would ever wear sables in memory of him but Alas how short-sighted is man, How keep that vow when penniless!" It says a good deal for the strength of his feelings that he couldn't have been seven

year old when my poor Lirriper died and to have kept to it ever since is highly creditable. But we know there's good in all of us—if we only knew where it was in some of us—and though it was far from delicate in Joshua to work upon the dear child's feelings when first sent to school and write down into Lincolnshire for his pocket-money by return of post and got it, still he is my poor Lirriper's own youngest brother and mightn't have meant not paying his bill at the Salisbury Arms when his affection took him down to stay a fortnight at Hatfield churchyard and might have meant to keep sober but for bad company. Consequently if the Major *had* played on him with the garden-engine which he got privately into his room without my knowing of it, I think that much as I should have regretted it there would have been words betwixt the Major and me. Therefore my dear though he played on Mr. Buffle by mistake being hot in his head, and though it might have been misrepresented down at Wozenham's into not being ready for Mr. Buffle in other respects he being the Assessed Taxes, still I do not so much regret it as perhaps I ought. And whether Joshua Lirriper will yet do well in life I cannot say, but I did hear of his coming out at a Private Theatre in the character of a Bandit without receiving any offers afterwards from the regular managers.

Mentioning Mr. Buffle gives an instance of there being good in persons where good is not expected, for it cannot be denied that Mr. Buffle's manners when engaged in his business were not agreeable. To collect is one thing and to look about as if suspicious of the goods being gradually removing in the dead of the night by a back door is another, over taxing you have no control but suspecting is voluntary. Allowances too must ever be made for a gentleman of the Major's warmth not relishing being spoke to with a pen in the mouth, and while I do not know that it is more irritable to my own feelings to have a low-crowned hat with a broad brim kept on in-doors than any other hat still I can appreciate the Major's, besides which without bearing malice or vengeance the Major is a man that scores up arrears as his habit always was with Joshua Lirriper. So at last my dear the Major lay in wait for Mr. Buffle and it worried me a good deal. Mr. Buffle gives his rap of two sharp knocks one day and the Major bounces to the door. "Collector has called for two quarters' Assessed Taxes" says Mr. Buffle. "They are ready for him" says the Major and brings him in here. But on the way Mr. Buffle looks about him in his usual suspicious manner and the Major fires and asks him "Do you see a Ghost sir?" "No sir" says Mr. Buffle. "Because I have before noticed you" says the Major "apparently looking for a spectre very hard beneath the roof of my respected friend. When you find that supernatural agent, be so good as point him out sir." Mr. Buffle stares at the Major and then nods at me. "Mrs. Lirriper sir" says the Major going off into a perfect steam and introducing me with his hand. "Pleasure of knowing her" says Mr. Buffle.

"A—hum!—Jemmy Jackman sir!" says the Major introducing himself. "Honour of knowing you by sight" says Mr. Buffle. "Jemmy Jackman sir" says the Major wagging his head sideways in a sort of an obstinate fury "presents to you his esteemed friend that lady Mrs. Emma Lirriper of Eighty-one Norfolk-street Strand London in the County of Middlesex in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Upon which occasion sir," says the Major, "Jemmy Jackman takes your hat off." Mr. Buffle looks at his hat where the Major drops it on the floor, and he picks it up and puts it on again. "Sir" says the Major very red and looking him full in the face "there are two quarters of the Gallantry Taxes due and the Collector has called." Upon which if you can believe my words my dear the Major drops Mr. Buffle's hat off again. "This—" Mr. Buffle begins very angry with his pen in his mouth, when the Major steaming more and more says "Take your bit out sir! Or by the whole infernal system of Taxation of this country and every individual figure in the National Debt, I'll get upon your back and ride you like a horse!" which it's my belief he would have done and even actually jerking his neat little legs ready for a spring as it was. "This" says Mr. Buffle without his pen "is an assault and I'll have the law of you." "Sir" replies the Major "if you are a man of honour, your Collector of whatever may be due on the Honourable Assessment by applying to Major Jackman at The Parlours Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings, may obtain what he wants in full at any moment."

When the Major glared at Mr. Buffle with those meaning words my dear I literally gasped for a teaspoonful of sal volatile in a wine-glass of water, and I says "Pray let it go no further gentlemen I beg and beseech of you!" But the Major could be got to do nothing else but snort long after Mr. Buffle was gone, and the effect it had upon my whole mass of blood when on the next day of Mr. Buffle's rounds the Major spruced himself up and went humming a tune up and down the street with one eye almost obliterated by his hat there are not expressions in Johnson's Dictionary to state. But I safely put the street door on the jar and got behind the Major's blinds with my shawl on and my mind made up the moment I saw danger to rush out screeching till my voice failed me and catch the Major round the neck till my strength went and have all parties bound. I had not been behind the blinds a quarter of an hour when I saw Mr. Buffle approaching with his Collecting-books in his hand. The Major likewise saw him approaching and hummed louder and himself approached. They met before the Airy railings. The Major takes off his hat at arm's length and says "Mr. Buffle I believe?" Mr. Buffle takes off *his* hat at arm's length and says "That is my name sir." Says the Major "Have you any commands for me, Mr. Buffle?" Says Mr. Buffle "Not any sir." Then my dear both of 'em bowed very low and haughty and parted, and whenever Mr. Buffle made his rounds in future him and the Major always met and bowed before the Airy railings, putting me much in

mind of Hamlet and the other gentleman in mourning before killing one another, though I could have wished the other gentleman had done it fairer and even if less polite no poison.

Mr. Buffle's family were not liked in this neighbourhood, for when you are a householder my dear you'll find it does not come by nature to like the Assessed, and it was considered besides that a one-horse pleyton ought not to have elevated Mrs. Buffle to that height especially when purloined from the Taxes which I myself did consider uncharitable. But they were *not* liked and there was that domestic unhappiness in the family in consequence of their both being very hard with Miss Buffle and one another on account of Miss Buffle's favouring Mr. Buffle's article young gentleman, that it *was* whispered that Miss Buffle would go either into a consumption or a convent she being so very thin and off her appetite and two close-shaved gentlemen with white bands round their necks peeping round the corner whenever she went out in waistcoats resembling black pinafores. So things stood towards Mr. Buffle when one night I was woke by a frightful noise and a smell of burning, and going to my bedroom window saw the whole street in a glow. Fortunately we had two sets empty just then and before I could hurry on some clothes I heard the Major hammering at the attics' doors and calling out "Dress yourselves!—Fire! Don't be frightened!—Fire! Collect your presence of mind!—Fire! All right—Fire!" most tremendously. As I opened my bedroom door the Major came tumbling in over himself and me and caught me in his arms. "Major" I says breathless "where is it?" "I don't know dearest madam," says the Major—"Fire! Jemmy Jackman will defend you to the last drop of his blood—Fire! If the dear boy was at home what a treat this would be for him—Fire!" and altogether very collected and bold except that he couldn't say a single sentence without shaking me to the very centre with roaring Fire. We ran down to the drawing-room and put our heads out of window, and the Major calls to an unfeeling young monkey scampering by be joyful and ready to split "Where is it?—Fire!" The monkey answers without stopping "Oh here's a lark! Old Buffle's been setting his house alight to prevent its being found out that he boned the Taxes. Hurrah! Fire!" And then the sparks came flying up and the smoke came pouring down and the crackling of flames and spitting of water and banging of engines and backing of axes and breaking of glass and knocking at doors and the shouting and crying and hurrying and the heat and altogether gave me a dreadful palpitation. "Don't be frightened dearest madam," says the Major,—"Fire! There's nothing to be alarmed at—Fire! Don't open the street door till I come back—Fire! I'll go and see if I can be of any service—Fire! You're quite composed and comfortable ain't you?—Fire, Fire, Fire!" It was in vain for me to hold the man and tell him he'd be galloped to death by the engines—pumped to death by his

over-exertions—wet-footed to death by the slop and mess—flattened to death when the roofs fell in—his spirit was up and he went scampering off after the young monkey with all the breath he had and none to spare, and me and the girls huddled together at the parlour windows looking at the dreadful flames above the houses over the way, Mr. Buffle's being round the corner. Presently what should we see but some people running down the street straight to our door, and then the Major directing operations in the busiest way, and then some more people and then—carried in a chair similar to Guy Fawkes—Mr. Buffle in a blanket!

My dear the Major has Mr. Buffle brought up our steps and whisked into the parlour and carted out on the sofa, and then he and all the rest of them without so much as a word burst away again full speed, leaving the impression of a vision except for Mr. Buffle awful in his blanket with his eyes a rolling. In a twinkling they all burst back again with Mrs. Buffle in another blanket, which whisked in and carted out on the sofa they all burst off again and all burst back again with Miss Buffle in another blanket, which again whisked in and carted out they all burst off again and all burst back again with Mr. Buffle's article young gentleman in another blanket—him a holding round the necks of two men carrying him by the legs, similar to the picture of the disgraceful croctur who has lost the fight (but where the chair I do not know) and his hair having the appearance of newly played upon. When all four of a row, the Major rubs his hands and whispers me with what little hoarseness he can get together, "If our dear remarkable boy was only at home what a delightful treat this would be for him!"

My dear we made them some hot tea and toast and some hot brandy-and-water with a little comfortable nutmeg in it, and at first they were scared and low in their spirits but being fully insured got sociable. And the first use Mr. Buffle made of his tongue was to call the Major his Preserver and his best of friends and to say "My for ever dearest sir let me make you known to Mrs. Buffle" which also addressed him as her Preserver and her best of friends and was fully as cordial as the blanket would admit of. Also Miss Buffle. The article young gentleman's head was a little light and he sat a moaning "Robina is reduced to cinders, Robina is reduced to cinders!" Which went more to the heart on account of his having got wrapped in his blanket as if he was looking out of a violinceller-case, until Mr. Buffle says "Robina speak to him!" Miss Buffle says "Dear George!" and but for the Major's pouring down brandy-and-water on the instant which caused a catching in his throat owing to the nutmeg and a violent fit of coughing it might have proved too much for his strength. When the article young gentleman got the better of it Mr. Buffle leaned up against Mrs. Buffle being two bundles, a little while in confidence, and then says with tears in his eyes which the Major noticing wiped, "We have not been an united family, let us after this danger become so, take her George."

The young gentleman could not put his arm out far to do it, but his spoken expressions were very beautiful though of a wandering class. And I do not know that I ever had a much pleasanter meal than the breakfast we took together after we had all dozed, when Miss Buffle made tea very sweetly in quite the Roman style as depicted formerly at Covent Garden Theatre and when the whole family was most agreeable, as they have ever proved since that night when the Major stood at the foot of the Fire-Escape and claimed them as they came down—the young gentleman headforemost, which accounts. And though I do not say that we should be less liable to think ill of one another if strictly limited to blankets, still I do say that we might most of us come to a better understanding if we kept one another less at a distance.

Why there's Wozenham's lower down on the other side of the street. I had a feeling of much soreness several years respecting what I must still ever call Miss Wozenham's systematic underbidding and the likeness of the house in Bradshaw having far too many windows and a most umbrageous and outrageous Oak which never yet was seen in Norfolk-street nor yet a carriage and four at Wozenham's door, which it would have been far more to Bradshaw's credit to have drawn a cab. This frame of mind continued bitter down to the very afternoon in January last when one of my girls, Sally Rairyganoo which I still suspect of Irish extraction though family represented Cambridge, else why abscond with a bricklayer of the Limerick persuasion and be married in patters not waiting till his black eye was decently got round with all the company fourteen in number and one horse fighting outside on the roof of the vehicle—I repeat my dear my ill-regulated state of mind towards Miss Wozenham continued down to the very afternoon of January last past when Sally Rairyganoo came banging (I can use no milder expression) into my room with a jump which may be Cambridge and may not, and said "Hurroo Missis! Miss Wozenham's sold up!" My dear when I had it thrown in my face and conscience that the girl Sally had reason to think I could be glad of the ruin of a fellow-creeter, I burst into tears and dropped back in my chair and I says "I am ashamed of myself!"

Well! I tried to settle to my tea but I could not do it what with thinking of Miss Wozenham and her distresses. It was a wretched night and I went up to a front window and looked over at Wozenham's and as well as I could make it out down the street in the fog it was the dismalest of the dismal and not a light to be seen. So at last I says to myself "This will not do," and I puts on my oldest bonnet and shawl not wishing Miss Wozenham to be reminded of my best at such a time, and lo and behold you I goes over to Wozenham's and knocks. "Miss Wozenham at home?" I says turning my head when I heard the door go. And then I saw it was Miss Wozenham herself who had opened it and sadly worn she was poor thing and her eyes all swelled and swelled with crying. "Miss Wozenham" I says "it is several years since

there was a little unpleasantness betwixt us on the subject of my grandson's cap being down your Airy. I have overlooked it and I hope you have done the same." "Yes Mrs. Lirriper" she says in a surprise "I have." "Then my dear" I says "I should be glad to come in and speak a word to you." Upon my calling her my dear Miss Wozenham breaks out a crying most pitiful, and a not unfeeling elderly person that might have been better shaven in a nightcap with a hat over it offering a polite apology for the mumps having worked themselves into his constitution, and also for sending home to his wife on the bellows which was in his hand as a writing-desk, looks out of the back parlour and says "The lady wants a word of comfort" and goes in again. So I was able to say quite natural "Wants a word of comfort does she sir? Then please the pigs she shall have it!" And Miss Wozenham and me we go into the front room with a wretched light that seemed to have been crying too and was sputtering out, and I says "Now my dear, tell me all," and she wrings her hands and says "Oh Mrs. Lirriper that man is in possession here, and I have not a friend in the world who is able to help me with a shilling."

It doesn't signify a bit what a talkative old body like me said to Miss Wozenham when she said that, and so I'll tell you instead my dear that I'd have given thirty shillings to have taken her over to tea, only I durstn't on account of the Major. Not you see but what I knew I could draw the Major out like thread and wind him round my finger on most subjects and perhaps even on that if I was to set myself to it, but him and me had so often belied Miss Wozenham to one another that I was shamefaced, and I knew she had offended his pride and never mine, and likewise I felt timid that that Rairyganoo girl might make things awkward. So I says "My dear if you could give me a cup of tea to clear my muddle of a head I should better understand your affairs." And we had the tea and the affairs too and after all it was but forty pound, and—There! she's as industrious and straight a creeter as ever lived and has paid back half of it already, and where's the use of saying more, particularly when it ain't the point? For the point is that when she was a kissing my hands and holding them in hers and kissing them again and blessing blessing blessing, I cheered up at last and I says "Why what a waddling old goose I have been my dear to take you for something so very different!" "Ah but I too" says she "how have I mistaken you?" "Come for goodness' sake tell me" I says "what you thought of me?" "Oh?" says she "I thought you had no feeling for such a hard hand-to-mouth life as mine, and were rolling in affluence." I says shaking my sides (and very glad to do it for I had been a choking quite long enough) "Only look at my figure my dear and give me your opinion whether if I was in affluence I should be likely to roll in it!" That did it! We got as merry as grigs (whatever they are, if you happen to know my dear—I don't) and I went home to my blessed home as happy and as thankful as could be. But before

I make an end of it, think even of my having misunderstood the Major! Yes! For next forenoon the Major came into my little room with his brushed hat in his hand and he begins "My dearest madam—" and then put his face in his hat as if he had just come into church. As I sat all in a maze he came out of his hat and began again. "My esteemed and beloved friend—" and then went into his hat again. "Major," I cries out frightened "has anything happened to our darling boy?" "No, no, no," says the Major "but Miss Wozenham has been here this morning to make her excuses to me, and by the Lord I can't get over what she told me." "Hoity toity, Major," I says "you don't know yet that I was afraid of you last night and didn't think half as well of you as I ought! So come out of church Major and forgive me like a dear old friend and I'll never do so any more." And I leave you to judge my dear whether I ever did or will. And how affecting to think of Miss Wozenham out of her small income and her losses doing so much for her poor old father, and keeping a brother that had had the misfortune to soften his brain against the hard mathematics as neat as a new pin in the three back represented to lodgers as a lumber-room and consuming a whole shoulder of mutton whenever provided!

And now my dear I really am a going to tell you about my Legacy if you're inclined to favour me with your attention, and I did fully intend to have come straight to it only one thing does so bring up another. It was the month of June and the day before Midsummer Day when my girl Winifred Madgers—she was what is termed a Plymouth Sister, and the Plymouth Brother that made away with her was quite right, for a tidier young woman for a wife never came into a house and afterwards called with the beautifullest Plymouth Twins—it was the day before Midsummer Day when Winifred Madgers comes and says to me "A gentleman from the Consul's wishes particular to speak to Mrs. Lirriper." If you'll believe me my dear the Consols at the bank where I have a little matter for Jemmy got into my head, and I says "Good gracious I hope he ain't had any dreadful fall!" Says Winifred "He don't look as if he had ma'am." And I says "Show him in."

The gentleman came in dark and with his hair cropped what I should consider too close, and he says very polite "Madame Lirriper!" I says "Yes sir. Take a chair." "I come," says he "frrom the Frwrrench Consul's." So I saw at once that it wasn't the Bank of England. "We have rrweccived," says the gentleman turning his r's very curious and skilful, "frfrom the Mairrwie at Sens, a communication which I will have the honour to rrread. Madame Lirriwiper understands Frwrrench!" "Oh dear no sir!" says I. "Madame Lirriper don't understand anything of the sort." "It matters not," says the gentleman, "I will trrwanslate."

With that my dear the gentleman after reading something about a Department and a Mairie (which Lord forgive me I supposed till the

Major came home was Mary, and never was I more puzzled than to think how that young woman came to have so much to do with it) translated a lot with the most obliging pains, and it came to this:—That in the town of Sens in France, an unknown Englishman lay a dying. That he was speechless and without motion. That in his lodging there was a gold watch and a purse containing such and such money and a trunk containing such and such clothes, but no passport and no papers, except that on his table was a pack of cards and that he had written in pencil on the back of the ace of hearts: "To the authorities. When I am dead, pray send what is left, as a last Legacy, to Mrs. Lirriper Eighty-one Norfolk-street Strand London." When the gentleman had explained all this, which seemed to be drawn up much more methodical than I should have given the French credit for, not at that time knowing the nation, he put the document into my hand. And much the wiser I was for that you may be sure, except that it had the look of being made out upon grocery-paper and was stamped all over with eagles.

"Does Madame Lirriwiper" says the gentleman "believe she rrwecognises her unfortunate compatrriwiot?"

You may imagine the flurry it put me into my dear to be talked to about my compatriots.

I says "Excuse me. Would you have the kindness sir to make your language as simple as you can?"

"This Englishman unhappy, at the point of death. This compatrriwiot afflicted," says the gentleman.

"Thank you sir" I says "I understand you now. No sir I have not the least idea who this can be."

"Has Madame Lirriwiper no son, no nephew, no godson, no frwrriend, no acquaintance of any kind in Frwrrench?"

"To my certain knowledge" says I "no relation or friend, and to the best of my belief no acquaintance."

"Pardon me. You take Locataires?" says the gentleman.

My dear fully believing he was offering me something with his obliging foreign manners—snuff for anything I knew—I gave a little bend of my head and I says if you'll credit it, "No I thank you. I have not contracted the habit."

The gentleman looks perplexed and says "Lodgers?"

"Oh!" says I laughing. "Bless the man! Why yes to be sure!"

"May it not be a former lodger?" says the gentleman. "Some lodger that you pardoned some rrwent? You have pardoned lodgers some rrwent?"

"Hem! It has happened sir" says I, "but I assure you I can call to mind no gentleman of that description that this is at all likely to be."

In short my dear we could make nothing of it, and the gentleman noted down what I said and went away. But he left me the paper of which he had two with him, and when the Major came in I says to the Major as I put it in his hand

"Major here's Old Moore's Almanack with the hieroglyphic complete, for your opinion."

It took the Major a little longer to read than I should have thought, judging from the copious flow with which he seemed to be gifted when attacking the organ-men, but at last he got through it and stood a gazing at me in amazement.

"Major" I says "you're paralysed."

"Madam" says the Major, "Jemmy Jackman is doubled up."

Now it did so happen that the Major had been out to get a little information about railroads and steam-boats, as our boy was coming home for his Midsummer holidays next day and we were going to take him somewhere for a treat and a change. So while the Major stood a gazing it came into my head to say to him "Major I wish you'd go and look at some of your books and maps, and see whereabouts this same town of Sens is in France."

The Major he roused himself and he went into the Parlours and he poked about a little, and he came back to me and he says: "Sens my dearest madam is seventy odd miles south of Paris."

With what I may truly call a desperate effort "Major" I says "we'll go there with our blessed boy!"

If ever the Major was beside himself it was at the thoughts of that journey. All day long he was like the wild man of the woods after meeting with an advertisement in the papers telling him something to his advantage, and early next morning hours before Jemmy could possibly come home he was outside in the street ready to call out to him that we was all a going to France. Young Rosy-checks you may believe was as wild as the Major, and they did carry on to that degree that I says "If you two children ain't more orderly I'll pack you both off to bed." And then they fell to cleaning up the Major's telescope to see France with, and went out and bought a leather bag with a snap to hang round Jemmy, and him to carry the money like a little Fortunatus with his purse.

If I hadn't passed my word and raised their hopes, I doubt if I could have gone through with the undertaking but it was too late to go back now. So on the second day after Midsummer Day we went off by the morning mail. And when we came to the sea which I had never seen but once in my life and that when my poor Lirriper was courting me, the freshness of it and the deepness and the airiness and to think that it had been rolling ever since and that it was always a rolling and so few of us minding, made me feel quite serious. But I felt happy too and so did Jemmy and the Major and not much motion on the whole, though me with a swimming in the head and a sinking but able to take notice that the foreign insides appear to be constructed hollower than the English, leading to much more tremendous noises when bad sailors.

But my dear the blueness and the lightness and the coloured look of everything and the very

sentry-boxes striped and the shining rattling drums and the little soldiers with their waists and tidy gaiters, when we got across to the Continent—it made me feel as if I don't know what—as if the atmosphere had been lifted off me. And as to lunch why bless you if I kept a man-cook and two kitchen-maids I couldn't get it done for twice the money, and no injured young women a glaring at you and grudging you and acknowledging your patronage by wishing that your food might choke you, but so civil and so hot and attentive and every way comfortable, except Jemmy pouring wine down his throat by tumblers-full and me expecting to see him drop under the table.

And the way in which Jemmy spoke his French was a real charm. It was often wanted of him, for whenever anybody spoke a syllable to me I says "Noncompreeny, you're very kind but it's no use—Now Jemmy!" and then Jemmy he fires away at 'em lovely, the only thing wanting in Jemmy's French being as it appeared to me that he hardly ever understood a word of what they said to him which made it scarcely of the use it might have been though in other respects a perfect Native, and regarding the Major's fluency I should have been of the opinion judging French by English that there might have been a greater choice of words in the language though still I must admit that if I hadn't known him when he asked a military gentleman in a grey cloak what o'clock it was I should have took him for a Frenchman born.

Before going on to look after my Legacy we were to make one regular day in Paris, and I leave you to judge my dear what a day *that* was with Jemmy and the Major and the telescope and me and the prowling young man at the inn door (but very civil too) that went along with us to show the sights. All along the railway to Paris Jemmy and the Major had been frightening me to death by stooping down on the platforms at stations to inspect the engines underneath their mechanical stomachs, and by creeping in and out I don't know where all, to find improvements for the United Grand Junction Parlour, but when we got out into the brilliant streets on a bright morning they gave up all their London improvements as a bad job and gave their minds to Paris. Says the prowling young man to me "Will I speak Inglis No?" So I says "If you can young man I shall take it as a favour," but after half an hour of it when I fully believed the man had gone mad and me too I says "Be so good as fall back on your French sir," knowing that then I shouldn't have the agonies of trying to understand him which was a happy release. Not that I lost much more than the rest either, for I generally noticed that when he had described something very long indeed and I says to Jemmy "What does he say Jemmy?" Jemmy says looking at him with vengeance in his eye "He is so jolly indistinct!" and that when he had described it longer all over again and I says to Jemmy "Well Jemmy what's it all about?" Jemmy

says "He says the building was repaired in seventeen hundred and four, Gran."

Wherever that prowling young man formed his prowling habits I cannot be expected to know, but the way in which he went round the corner while we had our breakfasts and was there again when we swallowed the last crumb was most marvellous, and just the same at dinner and at night, prowling equally at the theatre and the inn gateway and the shop-doors when we bought a trifle or two and everywhere else but troubled with a tendency to spit. And of Paris I can tell you no more my dear than that it's town and country both in one, and carved stone and long streets of high houses and gardens and fountains and statues and trees and gold, and immensely big soldiers and immensely little soldiers and the pleasantest nurses with the whitest caps a playing at skipping-rope with the bunchiest babies in the flattest caps, and clean tablecloths spread everywhere for dinner and people sitting out of doors smoking and sipping all day long and little plays being acted in the open air for little people and every shop a complete and elegant room, and everybody seeming to play at everything in this world. And as to the sparkling lights my dear after dark, glittering high up and low down and on before and on behind and all round, and the crowd of theatres and the crowd of people and the crowd of all sorts, it's pure enchantment. And pretty well the only thing that grated on me was that whether you pay your fare at the railway or whether you change your money at a money-dealer's or whether you take your ticket at the theatre, the lady or gentleman is caged up (I suppose by Government) behind the strongest iron bars having more of a Zoological appearance than a free country.

Well to be sure when I did after all get my precious bones to bed that night, and my Young Rogue came in to kiss me and asks "What do you think of this lovely lovely Paris, Gran?" I says "Jemmy I feel as if it was beautiful fireworks being let off in my head." And very cool and refreshing the pleasant country was next day when we went on to look after my Legacy, and rested me much and did me a deal of good.

So at length and at last my dear we come to Sens, a pretty little town with a great two-towered cathedral and the rooks flying in and out of the loopholes and another tower atop of one of the towers like a sort of a stone pulpit. In which pulpit with the birds skimming below him if you'll believe me, I saw a speck while I was resting at the inn before dinner which they made signs to me was Jemmy and which really was. I had been a fancying as I sat in the balcony of the hotel that an Angel might light there and call down to the people to be good, but I little thought what Jemmy all unknown to himself was a calling down from that high place to some one in the town.

The pleasantest-situated inn my dear! Right under the two towers, with their shadows a changing upon it all day like a kind of a sundial, and country people driving in and out of

the court-yard in carts and hooded cabriolets and such-like, and a market outside in front of the cathedral, and all so quaint and like a picture. The Major and me agreed that whatever came of my Legacy this was the place to stay in for our holiday, and we also agreed that our dear boy had best not be checked in his joy that night by the sight of the Englishman if he was still alive, but that we would go together and alone. For you are to understand that the Major not feeling himself quite equal in his wind to the height to which Jemmy had climbed, had come back to me and left him with the Guide.

So after dinner when Jemmy had set off to see the river, the Major went down to the Mairie, and presently came back with a military character in a sword and spurs and a cocked-hat and a yellow shoulder-belt and long tags about him that he must have found inconvenient. And the Major says "The Englishman still lies in the same state dearest madam. This gentleman will conduct us to his lodging." Upon which the military character pulled off his cocked-hat to me, and I took notice that he had shaved his forehead in imitation of Napoleon Bonaparte but not like.

We went out at the court-yard gate and past the great doors of the cathedral and down a narrow High Street where the people were sitting chatting at their shop-doors and the children were at play. The military character went in front and he stopped at a pork-shop with a little statue of a pig sitting up, in the window, and a private door that a donkey was looking out of.

When the donkey saw the military character he came slipping out on the pavement to turn round and then clattered along the passage into a back-yard. So the coast being clear, the Major and me were conducted up the common stair and into the front room on the second, a bare room with a red tiled floor and the outside lattice blinds pulled close to darken it. As the military character opened the blinds I saw the tower where I had seen Jemmy, darkening as the sun got low, and I turned to the bed by the wall and saw the Englishman.

It was some kind of brain fever he had had, and his hair was all gone, and some wetted folded linen lay upon his head. I looked at him very attentive as he lay there all wasted away with his eyes closed, and I says to the Major

"I never saw this face before."

The Major looked at him very attentive too, and he says

"I never saw this face before."

When the Major explained our words to the military character, that gentleman shrugged his shoulders and showed the Major the card on which it was written about the Legacy for me. It had been written with a weak and trembling hand in bed, and I knew no more of the writing than of the face. Neither did the Major.

Though lying there alone, the poor creature was as well taken care of as could be hoped, and would have been quite unconscious of any one's sitting by him then. I got the Major to say that we were not going away at present and that I

would come back to-morrow and watch a bit by the bedside. But I got him to add—and I shook my head hard to make it stronger—"We agree that we never saw this face before."

Our boy was greatly surprised when we told him sitting out in the balcony in the starlight, and he ran over some of those stories of former Lodgers, of the Major's putting down, and asked wasn't it possible that it might be this lodger or that lodger. It was not possible and we went to bed.

In the morning just at breakfast-time the military character came jingling round, and said that the doctor thought from the signs he saw there might be some rally before the end. So I says to the Major and Jemmy, "You two boys go and enjoy yourselves, and I'll take my Prayer-Book and go sit by the bed." So I went, and I sat there some hours, reading a prayer for him poor soul now and then, and it was quite on in the day when he moved his hand.

He had been so still, that the moment he moved I knew of it, and I pulled off my spectacles and laid down my book and rose and looked at him. From moving one hand he began to move both, and then his action was the action of a person groping in the dark. Long after his eyes had opened, there was a film over them and he still felt for his way out into light. But by slow degrees his sight cleared and his hands stopped. He saw the ceiling, he saw the wall, he saw me. As his sight cleared, mine cleared too, and when at last we looked in one another's faces, I started back and I cries passionately:

"O you wicked wicked man! Your sin has found you out!"

For I knew him, the moment life looked out of his eyes, to be Mr. Edson, Jemmy's father who had so cruelly deserted Jemmy's young unmarried mother who had died in my arms, poor tender creature, and left Jemmy to me.

"You cruel wicked man! You bad black traitor!"

With the little strength he had, he made an attempt to turn over on his wretched face to hide it. His arm dropped out of the bed and his head with it, and there he lay before me crushed in body and in mind. Surely the miserablest sight under the summer sun!

"O blessed Heaven!" I says a crying, "teach me what to say to this broken mortal! I am a poor sinful creature, and the Judgment is not mine."

As I lifted my eyes up to the clear bright sky, I saw the high tower where Jemmy had stood above the birds, seeing that very window; and the last look of that poor pretty young mother when her soul brightened and got free, seemed to shine down from it.

"O man, man, man!" I says, and I went on my knees beside the bed; "if your heart is rent asunder and you are truly penitent for what you did, Our Saviour will have mercy on you yet!"

As I leaned my face against the bed, his feeble hand could just move itself enough to touch me. I hope the touch was penitent. It

tried to hold my dress and keep hold, but the fingers were too weak to close.

I lifted him back upon the pillows, and I says to him:

"Can you hear me?"

He looked yes.

"Do you know me?"

He looked yes, even yet more plainly.

"I am not here alone. The Major is with me. You recollect the Major?"

Yes. That is to say he made out yes, in the same way as before.

"And even the Major and I are not alone. My grandson—his godson—is with us. Do you hear? My grandson?"

The fingers made another trial to catch at my sleeve, but could only creep near it and fall.

"Do you know who my grandson is?"

Yes.

"I pitied and loved his lonely mother. When his mother lay a dying I said to her, 'My dear this baby is sent to a childless old woman.' He has been my pride and joy ever since. I love him as dearly as if he had drunk from my breast. Do you ask to see my grandson before you die?"

Yes.

"Show me, when I leave off speaking, if you correctly understand what I say. He has been kept unacquainted with the story of his birth. He has no knowledge of it. No suspicion of it. If I bring him here to the side of this bed, he will suppose you to be a perfect stranger. It is more than I can do, to keep from him the knowledge that there is such wrong and misery in the world; but that it was ever so near him in his innocent cradle, I have kept from him, and I do keep from him, and I ever will keep from him. For his mother's sake, and for his own."

He showed me that he distinctly understood, and the tears fell from his eyes.

"Now rest, and you shall see him."

So I got him a little wine and some brandy and I put things straight about his bed. But I began to be troubled in my mind lest Jemmy and the Major might be too long of coming back. What with this occupation for my thoughts and hands, I didn't hear a foot upon the stairs, and was startled when I saw the Major stopped short in the middle of the room by the eyes of the man upon the bed, and knowing him then, as I had known him a little while ago.

There was anger in the Major's face, and there was horror and repugnance and I don't know what. So I went up to him and I led him to the bedside and when I clasped my hands and lifted of them up, the Major did the like.

"O Lord," I says "Thou knowest what we two saw together of the sufferings and sorrows of that young creature now with Thee. If this dying man is truly penitent, we two together humbly pray Thee to have mercy on him!"

The Major says "Amen!" and then after a little stop I whispers him, "Dear old friend fetch our beloved boy." And the Major, so clever as

to have got to understand it all without being told a word, went away and brought him.

Never never never, shall I forget the fair bright face of our boy when he stood at the foot of the bed, looking at his unknown father. And O so like his dear young mother then!

"Jemmy" I says, "I have found out all about this poor gentleman who is so ill, and he did lodge in the old house once. And as he wants to see all belonging to it, now that he is passing away, I sent for you."

"Ah poor man!" says Jemmy stepping forward and touching one of his hands with great gentleness. "My heart melts for him. Poor, poor, man!"

The eyes that were so soon to close for ever, turned to me, and I was not that strong in the pride of my strength that I could resist them.

"My darling boy, there is a reason in the secret history of this fellow-creature, lying as the best and worst of us must all lie one day, which I think would ease his spirit in his last hour if you would lay your cheek against his forehead and say 'May God forgive you!'"

"O Gran," says Jemmy with a full heart "I am not worthy!" But he leaned down and did it. Then the faltering fingers made out to catch hold of my sleeve at last, and I believe he was a trying to kiss me when he died.

There my dear! There you have the story of my Legacy in full, and it's worth ten times the trouble I have spent upon it if you are pleased to like it.

You might suppose that it set us against the little French town of Sens, but no we didn't find that. I found myself that I never looked up at the high tower atop of the other tower, but the days came back again when that fair young creature with her pretty bright hair trusted in me like a mother, and the recollection made the place so peaceful to me as I can't express. And every soul about the hotel down to the pigeons in the court-yard made friends with Jemmy and the Major, and went lumbering away with them on all sorts of expeditions in all sorts of vehicles drawn by rampagious cart-horses—with heads and with-out—mud for paint and ropes for harness—and every new friend dressed in blue like a butcher, and every new horse standing on his hind legs wanting to devour and consume every other horse, and every man that had a whip to crack crack-crack-crack-cracking it as if it was a schoolboy with his first. As to the Major my dear that man lived the greater part of his time with a little tumbler in one hand and a bottle of small wine in the other, and whenever he saw anybody else with a little tumbler, no matter who it was—the military character with the tags, or the inn servants at their supper in the court-yard, or towns-people a chatting on a bench, or country-people a starting home after market—down rushes the Major to clink his glass against their glasses, and cry—Holla! Vive Somebody! or Vive Something! as if he was beside himself. And though I could not quite approve of the Major's doing it, still the ways of the world are

the ways of the world varying according to different parts of it, and dancing at all in the open Square with a lady that kept a barber's shop my opinion is that the Major was right to dance his best and to lead off with a power that I did not think was in him, though I was a little uneasy at the Barricading sound of the cries that were set up by the other dancers and the rest of the company, until when I says "What are they ever calling out Jemmy?" Jemmy says "They're calling out Gran, Bravo the Military English! Bravo the Military English!" which was very gratifying to my feelings as a Briton and became the name the Major was known by.

But every evening at a regular time we all three sat out in the balcony of the hotel at the end of the court-yard, looking up at the golden and rosy light as it changed on the great-towers, and looking at the shadows of the towers as they changed on all about us ourselves included, and what do you think we did there? My dear if Jemmy hadn't brought some other of those stories of the Major's taking down from the telling of former lodgers at Eighty-one Norfolk-street, and if he didn't bring 'em out with this speech:

"Here you are Gran! Here you are Godfather! More of 'em! I'll read. And though you wrote 'em for me, Godfather, I know you won't disapprove of my making 'em over to Gran; will you?"

"No my dear boy," says the Major. "Everything we have is hers, and we are hers."

"Hers ever affectionately and devotedly J. Jackman, and J. Jackman Lirriper," cries the Young Rogue giving me a close hug. "Very well then Godfather. Look here. As Gran is in the Legacy way just now, I shall make these stories a part of Gran's Legacy. I'll leave 'em to her. What do you say Godfather?"

"Hip hip Hurrah!" says the Major.

"Very well then" cries Jemmy all in a bustle. "Vive the Military English! Vive the Lady Lirriper! Vive the Jemmy Jackman Ditto! Vive the Legacy! Now, you look out, Gran. And you look out, Godfather. I'll read! And I'll tell you what I'll do besides. On the last night of our holiday here when we are all packed and going away, I'll top up with something of my own."

"Mind you do sir" says I.

"Don't you be afraid, Gran" cries Young Sparkles. "Now then! I'm going to read. Once, twice, three and away. Open your mouths and shut your eyes, and see what Fortune sends you. All in to begin. Look out Gran. Look out Godfather!"

So in his lively spirits Jemmy began a reading, and he read every evening while we were there, and sometimes we were about it late enough to have a candle burning quite steady out in the balcony in the still air. And so here is the rest of my Legacy my dear that I now hand over to you in this bundle of papers all in the Major's plain round writing. I wish I could hand you the church towers over too, and the pleasant air and the inn yard and the

pigeons often coming and perching on the rail by Jemmy and seeming to be critical with their heads on one side, but you'll take as you find.

II.

A FAST LODGER RELATES A WILD STORY OF A DOCTOR.

I have lived in a common-place way, Major, in common-place times, and should have mighty little to tell of my own life and adventures (if I were put to it) that would be likely to interest any one save myself. But I have a story by me that shall be yours if you please. Of this story I have only to say a very few words. My father had the manuscript of it in his possession as long as I can remember, and he once allowed me, when I began to approach years of discretion, to read it. It was given to him by a very old friend, whom I dimly remember about our house when I was a boy—a French gentleman of obliging manners, and with a melancholy smile. He fades out of the memory of my youthful days very early, and I chiefly remember him because my father told me that he had received this manuscript from him, and that in parting with it the French gentleman had said: "Ah! few people would believe what went on at that time in France, but here's a specimen. I don't expect you to believe it, mind!"

When the time came for examining my deceased father's papers, this paper turned up among the rest. I put it aside, being immersed in business matters at the time, and only came upon it yesterday, in these very lodgings, in the course of a periodical rummage among a great box of papers from my bankers in the Strand laid by. The periodical rummage came to an end directly, and, with the zest naturally derived from a sense that I ought to be doing something else, I read over every word of the manuscript. It is faded and yellow, as you see; and it is odd, as you shall hear. Thus it goes:

It is pretty well known that as the eighteenth century drew towards its close, and as the moment approached when the mighty change which had been long threatening, was actually about to take place—it is well known, I say, that we Parisians had got into a condition of mind, which was about as bad as bad could be. Luxurious, used up, we had for the most part lost all sense of enjoyment; while as to any feeling of duty—Heaven help us! there was little enough of that. What did we believe of man's responsibility? We were here to enjoy ourselves if we could; if we could not—why, there was a remedy.

It was just one of those states of things which all thinking men were able to see, could not possibly last long. A great shock must be at hand, such men said: a constitution so utterly deranged must pass through some serious attack before it would be likely to get better. That "serious attack" came, and the great

French Revolution inaugurated a new condition of affairs. What I have to relate, however, has nothing to do with the revolution, but took place some few years before that great convulsion shook the world, and another era began.

It is not to be supposed that men who held the opinions, and led the lives of the better class of Parisians at that time, were happy. Indeed, a frank open-hearted man, who was tolerably content with the world as he found it, and was able and willing to enjoy himself in it; would have been looked upon with contempt by the more enlightened (and miserable) sort, and would have been regarded as a man deficient alike in intellect and "ton." There were few enough of such, however, and the representatives of the morbid class had it all their own way. Of course among these it was not likely that an agency so well calculated to help them out of their difficulties as suicide should be neglected, and it is not too much to say that the sacrifices offered up at that terrible shrine, were beyond all limits of ordinary proportion. It was such a resource to fall back upon, such a quick way out of the difficulty! Was money short? Was a wife troublesome, or a mistress obdurate? Was there a course of east wind setting in? Were pleasures pleasures no longer, while pain was still pain? Was life, for any reason, not worth having; was it a bore, a penance, a hell upon earth? Here was the remedy at hand—get rid of it. As to what lay beyond—pooh! one must take his chance. Perhaps there was nothing. Perhaps there were the Elysian Fields, with endless earthly gratifications, and sempiternal youth and freshness, to make them enjoyable. "Let us be off with all speed," said the weary ones; "who will help us on our way?"

Helpers were not wanting. There were cunning poisons which would dispose of you in a twinkling, and let you know nothing about it. There were baths and lances, and anybody could seat himself in a warm bath and open one of his own veins and die with decency. Then there were pistols, beautiful little toys all inlaid with silver and mother-of-pearl, and with your own arms let into the butt, and your coronet, if you happened—which was very likely—to be a marquis. And was there not charcoal? The sleep said to be produced by its fumes was of the soundest—no dreams—no waking. But then you must be sure to stop up all the chinks, or you might happen to inhale a breath of air, and so find yourself back among the east winds and creditors, and the rest of the ills of life, with only a congestion of the head for your pains. All the various modes by which our poor little spark of life may be quenched, were in vogue at that time, but there was one particular method of doing the terrible business which was more fashionable than the rest, and of which it is my special business to treat.

There was a certain handsome street in Paris, and in the Faubourg St. Germain, in which there lived a certain learned and accomplished

Doctor. We will call this learned man, Dr. Bertrand. He was a man of striking and rather agreeable appearance, with a fine portly figure, and a handsome and strikingly intelligent face; his age was somewhere between forty and fifty; but there was one characteristic about his countenance, which every one who came in contact with him must have felt, though not all would have been able to explain what it was that affected them. His eyes were dead. They never changed, and they rarely moved. The rest of his face was as mobile as the faces of other people in the average, but not so with the eyes. They were of a dull leaden colour, and they actually seemed dead: the idea being further carried out by the livid and unwholesome tints of the skin around those organs. Judged from its hues, the skin might have mortified.

Dr. Bertrand, in spite of his dead eyes, was a personage of cheerful, almost gay, manners, and of an unvarying and amazing politeness. Nothing ever put him out. He was also a man surrounded by impenetrable mystery. It was impossible to get at him, or to break down the barriers which his politeness erected around him. Dr. Bertrand had made many discoveries by which the scientific world had profited. He was a rich man, and his pecuniary means had increased lately in a marked degree. The Doctor made no secret of his resources; it was part of his nature to enjoy luxury and splendour, and he lived in both. His house, an hotel of moderate size in the Rue Mauconseil, enclosed in a court-yard of its own, filled with shrubs and flowers, was a model of taste. His dining-room especially was the realised ideal of what such an apartment should be. Pictures, beautiful pictures—not pieces of wall furniture—decorated the walls, and these were lighted up at night in the most artful manner by lumps of enormous power. The floor was padded with the most splendid Persian carpets, the curtains and chairs were of the finest Utrecht velvet, and, in a conservatory outside, always heated to the most luxurious point, a fountain played perpetually: the light trickling of its water making music in the beautiful place.

And well might Dr. Bertrand have so perfect a dining-room in his house. To give dinners was a great part of Dr. Bertrand's business. In certain circles those dinners were highly celebrated, but they were always talked about under the rose. It was whispered that their splendour was fabulous; that the dishes and the wines reached a point of perfection absolutely unknown elsewhere; that the guests were waited upon by servants who knew their business, which is saying much; that they dined seated upon velvet fauteuils, and ate from golden plates; and it was said, moreover, that Dr. Bertrand entered into the spirit of the times, that he was a mighty and experienced chemist, and that it was an understood thing that Dr. Bertrand's guests did not feel free to be all they could wish, and had no desire to survive the night which succeeded their acceptance of his graceful hospitality.

Strange and intolerable imputation! Who could live under it? The Doctor could apparently. For he not only lived but thrived and prospered under it.

It was a delicate and dainty way of getting out of the difficulties of life, this provided by Dr. Bertrand. You dined in a style of unwonted luxury, and you enjoyed excellent company, the Doctor himself the very best of company. You felt no uneasiness or pain, for the Doctor knew his business better than that; you went home feeling a little drowsy perhaps, just enough so to make your bed seem delightful; you went off to sleep instantly—the Doctor knew to a minute how to time it all—and you woke up in the Elysian Fields. At least that was where you expected to wake up. That, by-the-by, was the only part of the programme which the Doctor could not make sure of.

Now, there arrived at Dr. Bertrand's house one morning, a letter from a young gentleman named De Clerval, in which an application was made, that the writer might be allowed to partake of the Doctor's hospitality next day. This was the usual form observed, and (as was also usual) a very handsome fee accompanied the letter. A polite answer was returned in due time, enclosing a card of invitation for the following day, and intimating how much the Doctor looked forward to the pleasure of making Monsieur de Clerval's acquaintance.

A dull rainy day at the end of November, was not a day calculated to reconcile to life any one previously disapproving of the same. Everything was dripping. The trees in the Champs Elysées, the caves of the sentry-boxes, the umbrellas of those who were provided with those luxuries, the hats of those who were not; all were dripping. Indeed, dripping was so entirely a characteristic of the day, that the Doctor, with that fine tact and knowledge of human nature which distinguished him, had, in arranging the evening programme, given orders that the conservatory fountain should be stopped, lest it should affect the spirits of his guests. Dr. Bertrand was always very particular that the spirits of his guests should not be damped.

Alfred de Clerval was something of an exception to the Doctor's usual class of visitors. In his case it was not ennui, nor weariness of life, nor a longing for sensation, that made him one of the Doctor's guests. It was a mixture of pique and vexation, with a real conviction that what he had set his heart upon, as alone capable of bringing him happiness, was out of his reach. He was of a rash impetuous nature, he believed that all his chance of happiness was gone for life, and he determined to quit life. Two great causes ordinarily brought grist to Dr. Bertrand's mill; money troubles, and love troubles. De Clerval's difficulties were of the latter description. He was in a fever of love and jealousy. He was, and had been for some time, the devoted lover of Mademoiselle Thérèse de Farelles: a noted beauty of that day. All had gone smoothly for a time, until a certain Vicomte de Noel, a cousin of the lady's, appeared upon the scene, and Alfred

de Clerval becoming jealous, certain unpleasant scenes ensued, and finally a serious quarrel: Mademoiselle de Farelles belonging to that class of persons who are too proud to clear themselves from a false imputation when they might otherwise very easily do so. Throughout, De Clerval had never once seen the Vicomte; indeed, the principal intercourse between this last and Mademoiselle de Farelles, had been by letter, and it was partly this correspondence which had brought the quarrel about.

When De Clerval entered the salon of Dr. Bertrand where the guests were assembled before dinner, he found himself one of eight or ten persons, all about, like himself, to gather round the Doctor's table, with intentions of a desperate kind. Physiognomically they belonged to all manner of types, some being fat in the face, some thin in the face, some florid in the face, and some very pale in the face. In one respect alone there was a similarity among them; they all wore a sort of fixed impregnable expression which was intended to be, and to a certain extent was, unfathomable.

It has been said that there was every sort of person in this assembly. Here was, for instance, a fat man with a countenance naturally jovial, plethoric, in want of a little doctoring no doubt, too much of a "bon vivant" assuredly, but why on earth here now? If he had come in the morning to consult the Doctor on his digestion, one could understand; but what does he do here now? That man knows that to-morrow morning it will be proclaimed to the world that he is ruined, and an impostor. His affairs will collapse, like a house made of cards, and he who has an especial affection for social importance, and who has hitherto enjoyed a good position among his fellows, knows that he would never be able to show his face again. True to his sociability and love of company, to the last, he comes to make an end in good society. Surely no other system, but Dr. Bertrand's, would ever have met the views of this unhappy speculator. Honour then to Dr. Bertrand! who provides every class of persons with the means of suicide.

Here, again, is an individual of another description altogether. A dark thin close-shaved man, who has the fixed unfathomable expression more developed than all the others. This morning his valet knocked at his door, and brought him a letter directed to Monsieur, which the fille de chambre had found on Madame's dressing-table. Madame herself was not in the room, there was only the letter lying before the looking-glass. Monsieur read it, and he is here dining with Dr. Bertrand, and his face is deadly white, and he does not speak a word.

Such guests as these and De Clerval were of an exceptional character. The right man in the right place was a tall faded young man, whom Alfred observed leaning against the chimney-piece, too languid to sit, stand, or recline, and so driven to lean. He had a handsome countenance as far as symmetry of feature and proportion went, but the expression was terrible: so blank, so weary, so hopeless,

that one really almost felt that his coming there to dine with Dr. Bertrand was the best thing he could do. He was splendidly dressed, and the value of his waistcoat buttons and studs, seemed to prove that it was not poverty which had brought him there: just as the utter rapidity and blankness of his weary face seemed to indicate that he was incapable of such a strength of love as would drive him to this last resource. No, this was a case of ennui: hopeless, final, terrible. Some of his friends had dined with Dr. Bertrand, and it seemed to have answered, as they never bored him again. He thought he would try it; so here he was come to dinner. Others were there, like this one. Men who had already outlived themselves, so to speak—outlived their better selves—their belief, their health, their natural human interest in the things that happen beneath the sun—men whose hearts had gone to the grave long ago, and whose bodies were now to follow.

"We do not go through the ceremony of introduction in these little réunions of ours," whispered the Doctor in De Clerval's ear; "we are all supposed to know each other."

This was after the servant had solemnly announced dinner, and when the guests and their entertainers were passing to the *salle-à-manger*.

The room looked charming. The Doctor had not only caused the fountains to be stopped, but had even, to increase the comfort of the scene, directed that the great velvet curtains should be drawn over the entrance to the conservatory. The logs blazed upon the hearth, and the table was covered with glittering candles. For the Doctor well knew the effect of these, and how they add to the gaiety of every scene into which they are introduced.

The guests all took their places round that dreadful board, and perhaps at that moment—always a chilly one, under the circumstances—a serious sense of what they were doing forced itself upon some of them. Certainly Alfred de Clerval shuddered as he sat down to table, and certain good thoughts made a struggle to gain possession of his mind. But the die was cast. He had come to that place with an intent known to everybody present, and he must go through with the intent. He thought, too, that he caught the Doctor's eye fixed upon him. He must be a man—a MAN.

The Doctor seemed a little anxious at about this period of the entertainment, and now and then would sign impatiently to the servants to do their work swiftly. And so the oysters went round, and then some light wine. It was Chateau Yquem. The Doctor's wine was matchless.

Dr. Bertrand seemed resolved that there should be no pauses in the conversation, and tore himself to tatters—though apparently enjoying himself extremely—in order to keep it going at this time. There was one horrible circumstance connected with the flagging talk. No one alluded to the future. Nobody spoke of to-morrow. It would have been indelicate in the host; in the guests it would have been folly.

"On such a day as this," remarked the Doctor, addressing a distinguished looking spectre at the other end of the table, "you will have missed your drive in the Bois, M. le Baron?"

"No," replied the person addressed, "I was there in the afternoon for two hours."

"But the fog—could you see?"

"I had runners before me with torches. I had the idea that it might prove interesting."

"And, was it?" inquired another spectral personage, looking up suddenly: as if he rather regretted having committed himself to the Doctor's hospitality before trying this new experiment. "Was it interesting?"

"Not in the remotest degree," replied the Baron, in an extinguished sort of voice, and to the other's evident satisfaction. "It was impossible to go beyond a foot-pace, nothing but a grey mist was to be seen on all sides, the horses were bewildered and had to be led. In short, it was an experience to make a man commit sui—"

"Allow me strongly to recommend this salmi," cried the Doctor, in a loud voice. "My chef is particularly good at it." The Baron had got upon an awkward tack, and it was necessary to interrupt him. Dr. Bertrand well knew how difficult it was on these occasions to keep that horrid word, which the Baron had so nearly spoken, out of the conversation. Everybody tried to avoid it, but it would come up.

"For my part, I spent the day at the Louvre," said a little man with a green complexion, and all his features out of drawing. He was a gentleman who had hitherto been entirely unsuccessful in putting an end to himself. He had been twice cut down, and once sewn up when he had had the misfortune to miss his jugular by the eighth of an inch. He had been saved from drowning by a passing friend, whom he hated ever afterwards. He had charcoaled himself, forgetting to stop up the key-hole; and he had jumped out of window, just in time to be caught by a passing manure-cart. "I spent the day at the Louvre," remarked this unfortunate gentleman; "the effect of the fog upon some of the pictures was terrible."

"Dear me!" said the gentleman who had before regretted having missed the Bois in a fog, and who on the whole seemed to have come to the Doctor's prematurely; "I should like to have seen that very much, very much indeed. I wonder if there will be a fog to—"

"To-morrow," he was going to say. The Doctor thought the moment a propitious one for sending round the champagne; and even in this assembly it did its usual work, and the buzz of talk followed as it circulated.

"This poulet," said the Doctor, "is a dish on which we pride ourselves rather." It was curious that the Doctor's guests always had a disposition to avoid those dishes which he recommended the most strongly. They knew why they were come,

and that was all very well; but there was something treacherous in recommending things. But the Doctor was up to this. He had given enough of these entertainments to enable him to observe how regular this shyness was in its action, and so he thus paved the way for the next dish, which was always the dish he wanted his guests to partake of, and which they did partake of almost invariably. The next dish in this case was a new one, a "curry à l'Anglaise," and almost everybody rushed at it headlong. The dish was a novelty even in England then, and in France wholly unknown. The Doctor smiled as he raised the champagne to his lips. "There is a fine tonic quality about these English curries," he remarked.

"And tonics always disagree with my head," said a little man at the end of the table, who had not yet spoken. And he ate no more curry.

Alfred de Clerval was, in spite of his sorrows, so far alive to all that was going on around him as to miss partaking of some of Dr. Bertrand's favourite dishes. He had also entered into conversation with one of his next neighbours. On his left was the commercial man, whose exposure was to take place next day; and this gentleman, naturally a bon vivant, was making the most of his time, and committing fearful havoc on the Doctor's dishes and wine. On the right of De Clerval was a gentleman whom Alfred had not observed until they were seated together at table, but he was a remarkable looking man. They talked at first of indifferent matters, or of what went on around them. They got on together, as the saying goes. Men are not very particular in forming acquaintances when their duration is likely to be short, and so when the wine had circulated for some time—and every man there partook of it fiercely—these two had got to speak freely, for men who were but friends of an hour.

"You are a young man," said the stranger, after a pause, during which he had observed De Clerval closely; "you are a young man to be dining with Dr. Bertrand."

"The Doctor's hospitality is, I suspect, suited at times to persons of all ages," replied Alfred. "I was going to add, and of both sexes. How is it, by-the-by, that there are no ladies among the Doctor's guests?"

"I suppose he won't have them," retorted the other, with bitterness; "and he is right! They would be going into hysterics in the middle of dinner, and disorganising the Doctor's arrangements, as they do disorder every system of which they form a part, even to the great world itself."

"True enough," thought Alfred to himself. "This man has suffered as I have, from being fool enough to put his happiness in a woman's keeping."

De Clerval stole a look at him. He was a man considerably his own senior. He was a very tall man, and had something of that languid air in all his movements which often belongs to height. His face was deeply marked for his age, but there was a very kind and merciful expression on it, and, though he looked

weary and perhaps indolent, his was not by any means a blasé countenance. He looked like a man who has goodness in him, but instinctively and quite independent of any influence wrought by principle. A good nature, kind generous and honourable, was there; but the man had no rudder or compass to steer by. It was a fine new vessel adrift.

In his own terrible position one would say that such an one could have no leisure to think of anything else. A man under such circumstances might be excused for a little egotism, might be expected to be absorbed in himself and his own troubles; but it was not so with this stranger. His eye wandered from time to time round the table, and evidently his mind was largely occupied with speculations as to what the rest of Dr. Bertrand's patients were suffering under. "How curious it would be," he at length remarked to De Clerval, "if we could know what is amiss with each one of the guests assembled here. There is a little man opposite, for instance, who has not spoken once; see, he is writing in a furtive manner in his pocket-book—writing, perhaps, to some one who will be sorry to-morrow to hear what has happened. What on earth brought *him* here? One would have expected that he would have died somewhere in a corner alone. Perhaps he was afraid. There, again, is a man who, to all appearance, is worn out with illness. A fixed pain, perhaps, which is never to be better, and which he can—or will—bear no longer. One would have thought that he would have remained at home. But we all seem afraid to die in solitude, and the Doctor makes everything so very pleasant. Listen; here is a new surprise for us."

Dr. Bertrand was an energetic person, and a man of resource. Not only had he, in consideration of the fog and the rain, caused the fountain to be stopped, and the curtains to be drawn over the entrance to the conservatory, but he had arranged that some musicians should be placed where the flowers used to show, in order that a novel air of luxury might be given to this particular festival. Nor were these, common musicians, whose performance might have infused gloom rather than cheerfulness into the assembly. The Doctor had caused performers of choice ability to be selected, and their music now stole gently on the senses of the guests, and produced an effect that was infinitely agreeable.

"How well this man understands his business," remarked de Clerval to his neighbour. "There is something almost great about him."

There is nothing that varies more in its effect upon us than music; according to the circumstances under which we hear it, it will, to a great extent, prove either stimulating or sad-denying; still more, of course, does the effect depend upon the music selected. In this case, with the talk already started, with the wine circulating incessantly, with lights flashing in all directions, the effect of the music was exciting in the extreme. And then it had been selected with no common skill. It was not touching

music, such as makes one think; but it was made up of a selection of vigorous gallant tunes that seemed to stir the blood in the veins, and rather agitate the nerves than soothe them.

The music was an experiment which Dr. Bertrand had not tried before, and he watched the effect of it carefully.

De Clerval and his neighbour were silent for a time, partly because they were listening to the music, and also because, for the moment, it was difficult to hear one another. The Doctor's guests were noisy enough now. The wine—the good wine—was doing its work, and loosening the tied-up tongues. What talk it was! Talk of the gaming-table, and the night revel. The horrid infidelity of the time brayed out by throats through which no word of prayer or song of praise had passed since the days of earliest childhood.

De Clerval and his neighbour were pursuing their conversation, when the attention of both was suddenly drawn to the opposite side of the table.

Behind the Doctor's chair there always stood a middle-aged man whose business it was to remain stationary in that place, and to keep a steady eye upon every one at table, in order that the very first sign of anything going wrong with a guest might be instantly observed and acted on. The Doctor's calculations were generally most accurate; still he was human, and occasionally some peculiarity of constitution on the part of one of his patients would defeat him. Or they might partake of certain dishes in continuous succession, some one or two only of which the Doctor had intended to be eaten consecutively. In short, unpleasant things would take place occasionally, and so this special officer was in attendance.

This individual suddenly bent down and drew his master's attention to a gentleman seated at the other end of the table, over whom there had gathered a certain strange rigidity of figure and face. He had dropped his fork, and now sat bolt upright in his chair, staring straight before him with a fixity of gaze and a drop of the lower jaw which Dr. Bertrand understood perfectly well.

"Peste!" said the Doctor. "How cantankerous some exceptional constitutions are! One never knows where to have them. You must not lose a second; call in the others and remove him. He is of an epileptic constitution. Lose not a moment."

The familiar disappeared for an instant, and returned, accompanied by four noiseless men, who followed him swiftly to the end of the table where the wretched guest was seated. He had already begun to shriek aloud, while his features were distorted horribly, and the foam was gathering on his lips.

"Oh, my life!" he screamed. "My lost life! Give it me—I must have it—a loan—it was only a loan! I have frittered it away. I want it back. Only a little of it, then; a very little would be something. Ah, it is this man!" The Doctor was near him now, and

the epileptic made a furious attempt to get at him. "This man has got my life, my misspent life—it is going—going from me at his will—my life—my lost——" The miserable creature was overpowered and fainting, and the four noiseless men carried him away. Still, as they bore him through the door, he lifted up his voice again, and cried aloud for his youth—his lost youth—and said he would use it differently if they would give it back to him.

They could hear his screams for some time after that, even in the Doctor's padded and muffled house. The incident was horrible, and produced a state of excitement in the other guests. The noise and uproar which followed this terrible occurrence were hellish; everybody was up in arms at once, and it was upon the Doctor himself that all the indignation fell. What did he mean by it? He was an impostor. They had been brought there under false pretences. They had understood that what was done in that establishment was done decently, done effectually, done with a consideration for the feelings of the guests, done in a gentleman-like manner. Here they were, on the contrary, subjected to a scene which was horrible, disgusting, a thing of the hospitals, a horror!

The Doctor bowed before this storm of invectives. He was deeply, abjectly, miserably at what had occurred: such a thing was rare—rare in the extreme. There were people with constitutions that defied all calculation; people who did not know how to live, nor even how to— Well, he could only express his profound regret. Would they do him the favour to taste this new wine just brought up? It was Lafitte of a celebrated year, and the Doctor drained off a bumper, by way of setting a good example. It was soon followed by the already half-drunken guests, and the noise and uproar became worse than ever.

"Did you observe what that gentleman parroted of?" asked Dr. Bertrand of his familiar. "The gentleman who has just made a scene, I mean?"

"By unlucky chance," was the reply, "he partook in succession of three of your most powerfully seasoned dishes. I was thinking—but it is not for me to speak——"

"Yes, yes, it is. What were you thinking?"

"I was thinking, monsieur, whether it was judicious to put three preparations of such great strength next to each other."

"Quite true, quite true," answered the Doctor. "I will make a note of the case."

Meanwhile, De Clerval and his neighbour had fallen again into conversation. There seemed about the stranger something like an interest in his companion. It appeared as if he still thought this dining-room of the Doctor's no place for so young a man.

"If I am too young to be here," said De Clerval, "ought not you, who are of maturer years, to be too wise?"

"No," replied the other; "I have reasoned the thing out, and have thought well and care-

fully of what I am doing. I had one last chance of happiness after many missed or thrown away; the chance has failed me; there is nothing in store; there is nothing possible now that would give me the least satisfaction. The world is of no use to me, and I am of no use in the world."

There was a pause. Perhaps De Clerval felt that under the circumstances there was little room for argument; perhaps he perceived that, to reason against a course which he was himself pursuing, and yet which he felt unaccountably inclined to reason against, was preposterous—at any rate he was silent and the stranger went on:

"It is curious, with regard to certain of one's relatives, how we lose sight of them for a time, a very long time even, and then some circumstance brings one into contact with them, and the intercourse becomes intimate and frequent. It was so with me and my cousin. I had not seen her for years. I had been much away from Paris during those years—in Russia, at Vienna, and elsewhere—engaged in diplomatic service. In all the wild dissipations to be found at the different courts to which I was attached, I engaged with the most dissipated; and when I lately returned to Paris I believed myself to be a totally exhausted man, for whom a veritable emotion was henceforth out of the question. But I was mistaken."

"There is nothing," remarked Alfred, "that men are more frequently mistaken about."

"Well! I was so at any rate," continued the stranger. "After a lapse of many years I met my cousin again, and found in her, qualities so irresistible, so unlike any I had met with in the world, such freshness and truth——"

"There *are* such women on earth," interrupted De Clerval.

"In a word," continued the other, without noticing the interruption, "I came to the conclusion that, could I ally her destiny with mine, there was a new life and a happy one yet in store for me. I believed that I should be able to shake off my old vile garments, get rid of my old bad habits, and—*begin again*. What a vision came up before me of a life in which she should lead me and help me, be my guide along a good way better known to her than to me! I determined to make the cast, and that my life should depend on the issue of the throw. It was only yesterday that the cast was made—and the consequence is, that—that I am here."

Alfred was silent; a strange feeling of pity came over him for this man. In spite of his own trouble, there seemed to be a corner in his heart that was sorry yet for his neighbour.

"At that terrible interview," the stranger went on, "I forced the truth from her. Thérèse was not a demonstrative woman. There was a fund of reserve about her which kept her from showing herself to every one. It was a fault, and so was her pride, the besetting sin of those who have never fallen."

From the moment when the name of Thérèse

had been mentioned, the attention of Alfred had been drawn with increased fixity to the narrative to which he was listening. It was with greediness that he now caught at every word which followed.

"I forced the truth from her. I believe she spoke it the less unwillingly because it was her wish to save me from any delusion in the matter, and mercifully to deprive me of hope which could never have any real foundation. I besought her to tell me, in the name of Heaven's truth, was there one in the world more favoured—one who possessed the place in her heart which I had sought to occupy? She hesitated, but I pressed her hard and wrung it from her. Yes, there was one: one who held her heart for ever. I was greedy, I would know all: his name: his condition. And I did. I got to know it all—the history of their love—the name of my rival."

"And what was it?" asked Alfred, in a voice that seemed to himself like that of another man.

"Alfred de Clerval."

Alfred sprang to his feet, and looked towards the Doctor. "She loves me," he gasped, "and I am *here*!"

The sudden move of De Clerval attracted all attention. "Ah! another!" the guests yelled out. "Another who does not know how to behave himself. Another who is going to scream at us and drive us mad, and die before our very faces!"

"No, no!" cried Alfred. "No, no! not die, but live! I *must* live. All is changed, and I call upon this Doctor here to save me."

"How do you mean that 'all is changed'?" whispered the man whose narration had brought all this about. "Changed by what I have said?"

The noise was so great that De Clerval could not for the moment answer. The self-doomed wretches round the table seemed to feel a horrible jealousy at the idea of an escape. Even the Doctor sought in vain to restore order now.

"Ah, the renegade," cried the guests, "the coward! He is afraid. He has thought better of it! Impostor, what did he ever come among us for!"

"Hold! gentlemen," cried Alfred, in a voice that made the glasses ring; "I am neither coward nor renegade. I came here to die, because I wished to die. And now I wish to live—not from caprice nor fear, but because the circumstances which made me wish to die, are changed; because I have learnt the truth but this moment, learnt it in this room, learnt it at this table, learnt it of this gentleman."

"Tell me," said the stranger, now seizing him by the arm, "what had my story to do with all this? Unless—unless—"

"Monsieur le Vicomte de Noel," replied the other, "I am Alfred de Clerval, and the story you told me was of Thérèse de Farelles. Judge whether I am anxious to live or not."

A frightful convulsion passed over the features of the Vicomte de Noel, and he fell back in his chair.

Meanwhile the uproar continued among Dr. Bertrand's guests.

"We acknowledge nothing," one of the madened wretches cried, "as a reason for breaking faith with Death. We are all his votaries. We came together in good fellowship to do him honour. Hurrah for Death! Here is a fellow who would turn infidel to our religion. A renegade, I say again, and what should be the fate of renegades!"

"Follow me without a moment's delay," whispered a voice in Alfred's ear. "You are in the greatest danger."

It was the Doctor's familiar spirit who spoke. Alfred turned to follow him. Then he hesitated, and, hastily leaning down, said these words in De Noel's ear:

"For Heaven's sake don't let your life be sacrificed in this horrible way. Follow me, I entreat you."

"Too late! It is over," gasped the dying man. He seemed to make an ineffectual effort to say more, and then he spread his arms out on the table, and his head fell heavily upon them.

"You will be too late in another instant," said the Doctor's servant, seizing Alfred hastily by the arm. As De Clerval passed through the side-door which the man opened, such a rush was made towards the place as plainly showed what a narrow escape he had had. The servant, however, locked and bolted the door in time, and those poor half-poisoned and half-drunken wretches were foiled in their purpose.

And now, that escape effected, and the excitement of the previous moment at an end, a strange weakness and giddiness came over De Clerval, and he sunk upon a large sofa to which he had mechanically found his way. The room was a large one, and dimly lighted by a simple lamp, shaded, which stood upon a bureau or escritoire nearly large enough to occupy one end of the room, and covered with papers, bottles, surgical instruments, and other medical lumber. The room was filled with such matters, and it opened into another and a smaller apartment, in which were crucibles, a furnace, many chemical preparations, and a bath which could be heated at the shortest notice.

"The Doctor will be here himself immediately," said the familiar, approaching De Clerval with a glass, in which was some compound which he had hastily mixed; "meantime, he bade me give you this."

De Clerval swallowed the mixture, and the attendant left the room. No doubt there was work enough for him elsewhere. Before leaving, however, he told Alfred that he must by all means keep awake.

In compliance with these instructions, and feeling an unwonted drowsiness creeping over him, De Clerval proceeded to walk up and down the room. He was not himself. He would

stop, almost without knowing it, in the middle of his promenade, become unconscious for a moment, then would be suddenly and violently roused by finding that his balance was going, and once he did fall. But he sprang up instantly, feeling that his life depended on it. He set himself mental tasks, tasks of memory, or he would try to convince himself that he was in possession of his faculties by reasoning as to where he was, what circumstances had occurred, and the like: "I am in Dr.—Dr.—study," he would say to himself. "I know all about it—waiting to see—waiting, mind, to see—I am waiting—Dr.—" He was falling into a state of insensibility in spite of all his efforts, when Dr. Bertrand, whose approach he had not heard, stood there before him. The sight of the Doctor roused him.

"Doctor, can you save me?"

"First, I must ask *you* a question," replied the Doctor. "It is about one of the dishes at table—now recollect yourself. The 'Curry à l'Anglaise.' Did you partake of it?"

De Clerval was silent for a moment, making a violent effort to collect his bewildered faculties.

At last he remembered something that decided him.

"No, I did not. I remember thinking that an English dish is never good in France, and I let it pass."

"Then," said Dr. Bertrand, "there is good hope. Follow me into this room."

For a long time Alfred de Clerval's life was in the greatest danger. Although he had not partaken of that one particular dish which Dr. Bertrand considered it beyond his power to counteract, he had yet swallowed enough that was poisonous, to make his ultimate recovery exceedingly doubtful. Probably no other man but he who had so nearly caused his death could have saved his life. But Dr. Bertrand knew what was wrong—which is not always the case with doctors—and he also knew how to deal with that wrong. So, after a long and tedious illness and convalescence, Alfred so far recovered as to be able to drop the Doctor's acquaintance, which he was very anxious to do, and to take advantage of the information he had gained from the unfortunate Vicomte de Noél.

Whether Mademoiselle de Farelles was able to pardon the crime her lover had so nearly committed, in consideration of the fact that it was love for her which had led him on to attempt it, I don't know; but my belief is that she did pardon it.

For Dr. Bertrand, his career was a short one. The practices by which he was amassing a large fortune were not long in coming to the knowledge of the police authorities, and in due time it was determined by those who had the power to carry out their conclusions, that it would be for the good of the Doctor's health that the remainder of his life should be passed in the neighbourhood of Cayenne, where, if he

chose, he might give dinners to such of the convicts as could be the most easily spared by government.

III.

ANOTHER PAST LODGER RELATES HIS EXPERIENCE AS A POOR RELATION.

The evening was raw and there was snow on the streets, genuine London snow, half-thawed, and trodden, and defiled with mud. I remembered it well, that snow, though it was fifteen years since I had last seen its cheerless face. There it lay, in the same old ruts, and spreading the same old snares on the side-paths. Only a few hours arrived from South America via Southampton, I sat in my room at Morley's Hotel, Charing Cross, and looked gloomily out at the fountains, walked up and down the floor discontentedly, and fiercely tried my best to feel glad that I was a wanderer no more, and that I had indeed got home at last.

I poked up my fire, and took a long look backward upon my past life, through the embers. I remembered how my childhood had been embittered by dependence, how my rich and respectable uncle, whose ruling passion was vain-glory, had looked on my existence as a nuisance, not so much because he was obliged to open his purse to pay for my clothing and education, as because that, when a man, he thought I could reflect no credit upon his name. I remembered how in those days I had a soul for the beautiful, and a certain almost womanish tenderness of heart, which by dint of much sneering had been successfully extracted from me. I remembered my uncle's unconcealed relief at my determination to go abroad and seek my fortune, the cold good-bye of my only cousin, the lonely bitter fare-well to England hardly sweetened by the impatient hopes that consumed rather than cheered me—the hopes of name and gold, won by my own exertions, with which I should yet wring from those who despised me, the worthless respect which they denied me now.

Sitting there at the fire, I rang the bell, and the waiter came to me: an old man whose face I remembered. I asked him some questions. Yes, he knew Mr. George Rutland; recollected that many years ago he used to stay at Morley's when he came to London. The old gentleman had always stayed there. But Mr. George was too grand for Morley's now. The family always came to town in the spring, but, at this season, "Rutland Hall, Kent," would be pretty sure to be their address.

Having obtained all the information I desired, I began forthwith to write a letter:

"Dear George,—I dare say you will be as much surprised to see my handwriting as you would to behold an apparition from the dead. However, you know I was always a ne'er-do-well, and I have not had the grace to die yet. I am ashamed not to be able to announce myself as having returned home with my fortune

made; but mishaps will follow the most hard-working and well-meaning. I am still a young man, even though fifteen of the best years of my life may have been lost, and I am willing to devote myself to any worthy occupation. Meantime, I am anxious to see you and yours. A long absence from home and kindred makes one value the grasp of a friendly hand. I shall not wait for your reply to this, but go down to Kent the day after to-morrow, arriving, I believe, about dinner-time. You see I am making myself assured of your welcome for a few weeks, till I have time to look about me.

"I remain, dear George,

"Your old friend and cousin,

"GUY RUTLAND."

I folded this missive and placed it in its envelope. "I shall find out, once for all, what they are made of," I said, complacently, as I wrote the address, "George Rutland, Esq., Rutland Hall, Kent."

It was about seven on a frosty evening when I arrived at the imposing entrance of Rutland Hall. No Cousin George came rushing out to meet me. "Of course not," I thought; "I am unused to their formal manners in this country. He is lying in wait for me on the mat inside." I was admitted by a solemn person as quietly and mechanically as though my restoration to home and kindred were a thing that had happened regularly in his presence every day since his birth. He ushered me into a grand hall, but no mat supported the impatient feet of the dignified master of the house. "Ah!" said I, "even this, perhaps, were scarcely etiquette. No doubt he stands chafing on the drawing-room hearth-rug, and I have little enough time to make myself presentable before dinner." So, resigning myself to circumstances, I meekly followed a guide who volunteered to conduct me to the chamber assigned to my especial use. I had to travel a considerable distance before I reached it. "Dear me!" I remarked to myself when I did reach it, "I had expected to find the rooms in such a house more elegantly appointed than this!"

I made my toilette, and again submitting myself to my guide, was conveyed to the drawing-room door. All the way down stairs I had been coming pleasant speeches with which to greet my kinsfolk. I am not a brilliant person, but I sometimes succeed in pleasing when I try, and on this occasion I had the desire to do my best.

The drawing-room door was at the distant end of the hall, and my arrival had been so very quiet, that I conceived my expectant entertainers could hardly be aware of my presence in the house. I thought I should give them a surprise. The door opened and closed upon me, leaving me within the room. I looked around me, and saw—darkness there, and nothing more.

Ah, yes, but there was something more! There was a blazing fire which sent eddying swirls of light through the shadows, and right in the blush of its warmth a little figure was lounging in an easy-chair. The little figure was a girl of

apparently about fifteen or sixteen years of age, dressed in a short shabby black frock, who was evidently spoiling her eyes by reading by the firelight. She lay with her head thrown back, a mass of fair curly hair being thus tossed over the velvet cushion on which it rested, while she held her book aloft to catch the light. She was luxuriating in her solitude, and little dreaming of interruption.

She was so absorbed in her book, the door had opened and closed so noiselessly, and the room was so large, that I was obliged to make a sound to engage her attention. She started violently then, and looked up with a nervous fearfulness in her face. She dropped her book, sat upright, and put out her hand, eagerly grasping a thing I had not noticed before, and which leaned against the chair—a crutch. She then got up leaning on it and stood before me. The poor little thing was lame, and had two crutches by her.

I introduced myself, and her fear seemed to subside. She asked me to sit down, with a prim little assumption of at-home-ness, which did not sit upon her with ease. She picked up her book and laid it on her lap; she produced a net from the recesses of her chair, and with a blush gathered up the curls and tucked them into its meshes. Then she sat quiet, but kept her hand upon her crutches, as if she was ready at a moment's notice to limp away across the carpet, and leave me to my own resources.

"Thomson thought there was nobody in the room," she said, as if anxious to account for her own presence there. "I always stay in the nursery, except sometimes when they all go out and I get this room to myself. Then I like to read here."

"Mr. Rutland is not at home?" I said.

"No, they are all out dining."

"Indeed! Your papa, perhaps, did not get my letter?"

She blushed crimson.

"I am not a Miss Rutland," she said. "My name is Teecie Ray. I am an orphan. My father was a friend of Mr. Rutland, and he takes care of me for charity."

The last word was pronounced with a certain controlled quiver of the lip. But she went on. "I don't know about the letter, but I heard a gentleman was expected. I did not think it could be to-night, though, as they all went out."

"A reasonable conclusion to come to," I thought, and thereupon began musing on the eagerness of welcome displayed by my affectionate Cousin George. If I were the gentleman expected, they must have received my letter, and in it were fully set forth the day and hour of my proposed arrival. "Ah! George, my dear fellow," I said, "you are not a whit changed!"

Arriving at this conclusion, I raised my glance, and met, full, the observant gaze of a pair of large shrewd grey eyes. My little hostess for the time being was regarding me with such a curiously legible expression on her face, that I could not but read it and be amused. It said plainly: "I know more about you than you

think, and I pity you. You come here with expectations which will not be fulfilled. There is much mortification in store for you. I wonder you came here at all. If I were once well outside these gates, I should never limp inside them again. If I knew a road out into the world you come from, I would set out bravely on my crutches. No, not even for the sake of a stolen hour like this, in a velvet chair, would I remain here."

How any one glance could say all this, was a riddle; but it did say all this. The language of the face was as simple to me as though every word had been translated into my ear. Perhaps a certain internal light, kindled long ago, before this little orphan was born, or George Rutland had become owner of Rutland Hall, assisted me in deciphering so much information so readily. However that may be, certain things before surmised became assured facts in my mind, and a quaint bond of sympathy became at once established between me and my companion.

"Miss Ray," I said, "what do you think of a man who, having been abroad for fifteen years, has the impudence to come home without a shilling in his pocket? Ought he not to be stoned alive?"

"I thought how it was," said she, shaking her head, and looking up with another of her shrewd glances. "I knew it, when they put you into such a bad bedroom. They are keeping all the good rooms for the people who are coming next week. The house will be full for Christmas. It won't do," she added, meditatively.

"What won't do?" I said.

"Your not having a shilling in your pocket. They'll sneer at you for it, and the servants will find it out. I have a guinea that old Lady Thornton gave me on my birthday, and if you would take the loan of it I should be very glad. I don't want it at all, and you could pay me back when you are better off."

She said this with such business-like gravity, that I felt obliged to control my inclination to laugh. She had evidently taken me under her protection. Her keen little wits foresaw snares and difficulties besetting my steps during my stay at Rutland Hall, to which my newer eyes, she imagined, must be ignorantly blind. I looked at her with amusement, as she sat there seriously considering my financial interests. I had a fancy to humour this quaint confidential relation that had sprung up so spontaneously between us. I said gravely:

"I am very much obliged to you for your offer, and will gladly take advantage of it. Do you happen to have the guinea at hand?"

She seized her crutches, and limped quickly out of the room. Presently she returned with a little bon-bon box, which she placed in my hand. Opening it, I found one guinea, wrapped up carefully in silver paper.

"I wish it had been more!" she said, wistfully, as I coolly transferred it to my pocket, box and all. "But I so seldom get money!"

At this moment, the solemn person who had escorted me hither and thither before, announced that my dinner was served.

On my return to the drawing-room, I found, to my intense disappointment, that my beneficent bird had flown. Teecie Ray had limped off to the nursery.

Next morning, at breakfast, I was introduced to the family. I found them, on the whole, pretty much what I had expected. My Cousin George had developed into a pompous portly paterfamilias; and, in spite of his cool professions of pleasure, was evidently very sorry to see me. The Mamma Rutland just countenanced me, in a manner the most frigidly polite. The grown-up young ladies treated me with the most well-bred negligence. Unless I had been very obtuse indeed, I could scarcely have failed to perceive the place appointed for me in Rutland Hall. I was expected to sit below the salt. I was that dreadful thing—a person of no importance. George amused himself with me for a few days, displaying to me his various fine possessions, and then, on the arrival of grander guests, left me to my own resources. The Misses Rutland endured my escort on their riding expeditions only till more eligible cavaliers appeared. As for the lady of the house, her annoyance at having me quartered indefinitely on her premises, was hardly concealed. The truth was, they were new people in the circle in which they moved, and it did not suit them to have a poor relation coming suddenly among them, calling them "cousin," and making himself at home in the house. For me, I was not blind, though none of these things did it suit me to see. I made myself as comfortable as was possible under the circumstances, took every sneer and snub in excellent part, and was as amiable and satisfied on all occasions as though I believed myself to be the most cherished inmate of the household. That this meanness of mine should provoke their contempt, I had hardly a right to complain of. Nor did I. I accepted this like the rest of their hospitality, and smiled contentedly as the days went on. The gloom which had oppressed me on my first arrival in England had all betaken itself away. How could I feel otherwise than supremely happy at finding myself thus surrounded by my kind relations, thus generously entertained under their hospitable roof?

As I found that the guests at Rutland Hall enjoyed a certain freedom in their choice of amusements, and the disposal of their time, I speedily availed myself of this privilege. I selected my own associates, and I entertained myself as pleased me best. Not finding myself always welcomed in the drawing-room, I contrived, by a series of the most dexterous artifices, to gain the free entrée of the nursery. In this nursery were growing up, some five or six younger branches of the Rutland family. After a certain hour in the day none of the elders ever thought of invading its remote precincts. Five o'clock in the evening was the children's tea-hour, and the pleasantest, I thought, in the twenty-four. Nurse was a staid woman, who knew how to appreciate a little present now and

again, and to keep her own counsel on the subject. The children were not pleasant children; they were unruly mischievous little wretches. They conceived a sort of affection for me, because I sometimes brought to the nursery, sundry purchases made during solitary rides; picture-books, tops, dolls, or sweetmeats, procured by means of Teecie Ray's guinea. I suggested as much to Teecie one evening as she sat by, watching the distribution, and she nodded her head in sage satisfaction. She thought that I economised my substance very well. It covered a great many small extravagances, that guinea did.

Whatever might be my position at Rutland Hall, Teecie Ray's was simply intolerable. A spirit less brave must have been cowed and broken by it: a nature less delicate must have been blunted and made coarser. The servants openly neglected her, the children used her as they pleased; wreaked their humours on her, sparing neither blow nor taunt in their passions, and demanding from her at all times whatever service it suited their capricious fancy to need. Nurse, the only one who ever showed a grain of consideration for the orphan, would sometimes shield her from their impish attacks, when she could do so with safety to herself; but she was not permitted to deal with those darlings in the only fashion which would have been at all likely to bring them to reason. As for the elders of the house, Teecie Ray's momentary presence, or the mere mention of her name, was sufficient to ruffle their peace of mind. "What is to be done with that girl?" I heard Mrs. Rutland remark to one of her daughters. "If she were not lame, one might set her to earn her bread in some way; but, as it is——" A shrug of the shoulders, and a certain vinegar-like expression of countenance, which this lady knew how to assume, sufficiently developed the idea thus imperfectly expressed.

And how did Teecie Ray meet all this? She did not complain nor rebel, she did not sulk nor fret. Under that well-worn black frock of hers, she carried a little breastplate of sober determined endurance. When sorely tried, there was never any cowardly submission to be seen in her grave little face, neither was there ever in her manner or words either reproach or remonstrance. She simply endured. Her large patient eyes and mute wise mouth seemed to say, "Whatever I suffer, whatever I long to dare, gratitude shackles my limbs, and seals my lips. I am saved from many things; therefore I am dumb."

The second time I met my little benefactress, was a day or two after our first interview in the drawing-room. I came upon her, one afternoon by chance, limping down a hedge lane which lay to the back of the house, away beyond the gardens, and the kitchen gardens, and the pleasure-grounds. This lane, I found, led to a large meadow, and beyond the meadow there was a wooded hill, and far down at the distant side of the hill there was a river. This was Teecie Ray's favourite ramble, and her one avenue of escape

from the torments of the nursery. I immediately began pouring forth a legion of perplexing troubles and difficulties, to all of which she listened with perfect credulity, expressing her sympathy as I went along by an expressive nod of the head, or a shrewd swift glance. Then she gave me her wise little counsel when all was told, and went home, I believe, pondering on my case.

As the days passed, and my relations became more and more involved in their winter gaieties, I found myself more and more thrown upon my own resources for amusement. Occasionally I was included in an invitation, and accepted it; but in general I preferred indulging my fancy for keeping aloof from those who were little charmed with my company. A system of the most unblushing bribery had won for me a warm welcome from the savage tribes in the nursery. Many and many an evening found me walking down that hedged lane in the frosty dusk, with Teecie Ray limping by my side, and talking her grave simple little talk. I had always some fresh puzzle to propose to her, and she was always ready to knit her smooth brows over its solution. Once she stopped short, and struck her little crutches on the snow.

"You ought to go away from here and work," she cried. "O, if I could!"

A certain Sir Harry arrived at Rutland Hall; I will not trouble myself to think of his second name; it is not worth remembering. He was a wealthy bachelor of high family, and his movements were watched with interest by the lady of the house. This Sir Harry had a fancy for smoking his cigar in the hedged lane, and on more than one occasion he encountered my little benefactress limping on her solitary way, and stared at the pretty fresh face under her old black hat, till it blushed with uncomfortable brilliance. Teecie changed her track like a hunted hare, but Sir Harry scented her out, and annoyed her with his fulsome compliments. The matter reached Mrs. Rutland's ears, and she vented her chagrin on the defenceless little girl. I know not what sorry accusations and reproaches she bestowed upon her during a long private lecture; but, that evening when, at the children's tea-hour, I entered the nursery door with a new ball in my hand for Jack (the youngest and least objectionable of the band), I saw Teecie Ray's face grievously clouded for the first time. It was flushed and swollen with passionate crying. I do not intend to commit to paper certain remarks which I made sotto voce on beholding this disfigurement.

"Come, come, Teecie," I said, while nurse was busy quelling a disturbance which had arisen because "Cousin Guy" had not brought something to every one else as well as Jack; "where is all your philosophy, little mother? You need never preach to me again, if you set me such a bad example."

Teecie said never a word, but stared into the fire. This wound had cut deep. Sir Harry, and Mrs. Rutland, of Rutland Hall, at that moment I should have dearly loved to knock your two good-for-nothing heads together!

"Teecie," I said, "you have one friend, at any rate, even if he be not a very grand one."

She gave one of her quaint expressive little nods. Translated, it meant: "I understand all that, but I cannot talk just now." By-and-by, however, she brightened up, and went to the table to claim her share of tea and thick bread-and-butter, and I began to mend a bow belonging to Tom. Tom was one of the leaders of the unruly tribes, a regular savage chieftain.

Ere two days more had passed I felt strongly inclined to exercise the horsewhip on this young gentleman's shoulders. Tom, one fine morning, was seized with an impish inspiration to play a trick upon Teecie. Stealing her crutches, he walked about the nursery mimicking her poor little limp, and then marching off with them, heedless of her entreaties to have them restored, carried them in triumph out of doors, and smashed them in pieces with a hatchet. Teecie sat helpless in the din and riot of that ill-conditioned nursery. Bright bracing days came and found her a prisoner, looking with longing eyes through the window-panes, out over the beautiful country lanes. Tom saw her patience with the most audacious indifference. But why talk about Tom? I could not help believing, nor do I ever intend to help believing, that older heads than Tom's plotted the cruel caging of that bonnie bird.

The bird drooped on its perch; but who cared? Nurse vowed it was a shame, and showed more kindness than usual to the prisoner, but I will not venture to decide how much of this tenderness was owing to the odd crown-pieces which found their way from my hand to hers—all out of the guinea, of course? O yes, all out of the guinea. And there was another friend who sometimes expressed an interest in Teecie Ray's existence. This was that Lady Thornton, whose bounty had indirectly furnished me with pocket-money during my stay at Rutland Hall. The favour of this old lady I had done my best to win. She was a nice comfortable old lady, and I liked her. It happened that she called one day during Teecie Ray's imprisonment, to invite the Rutlands and their visitors, great and small, young and old, to a party to be given at her house, a few miles distant. I chanced to be alone in the drawing-room when she arrived, and I seized the opportunity to tell her the story of Teecie's crutches.

"A bad boy!" she said. "A bad, malicious boy! She must get new crutches before my party."

"Of course she must," I said, very heartily.

The old lady threw back her head, raising her fat chin in a peculiar sort of way, and looking at me direct through her spectacles.

"Indeed!" she said. "Pray, young man, what particular interest do you take in Teecie Ray?"

I smiled. "Oh, Teecie and I are excellent friends," I said.

"Teecie and you!" she repeated. "Pray, are you aware that Miss Ray is eighteen years of age?"

"Is she indeed? I know nothing about the ages of little girls."

"But Teecie is not a little girl, Mr. Guy Rutland. Teecie Ray is a woman, I tell you!"

Teecie Ray a woman! I could not help laughing. What? My little benefactress, my little mother! I am afraid I scandalised Lady Thornton on that occasion by my utter scorn of her proposition. Christina Rutland swept into the room at this crisis, and relieved me in my difficulty. But often afterwards during that day, I laughed when I thought of Lady Thornton's piece of information. Teecie Ray a woman? Preposterous!

One morning, when it wanted but a week of the party, a curious event occurred. The heads of the house met in consultation on the matter, in the library, before breakfast. An extraordinary thing had arrived from London at Rutland Hall. The thing was a large wooden case, directed to Teecie Ray. On being eagerly opened, it was found to contain a pair of crutches.

And such a pair of crutches! Light and symmetrical, and fanciful, works of art in their way. Tortoiseshell stems with silver mountings of exquisite workmanship, capped with dainty little cushions of embroidered velvet. Thunder-stricken were the elders of the house. "Who could have done this thing?" was on every lip. Who, indeed? Who outside of Rutland Hall had ever heard of Teecie Ray? These crutches were costly affairs. I knew the conclusion they came to, one and all. They pitched on Sir Harry as the culprit. It was a thorn in their side, and I rubbed my hands in glee.

Having considered the question in their dismay, they decided that Teecie should be kept in ignorance of her mysterious present. It was not fit for her to use, it would fill her mind with absurd ideas. And so, in spite of the arrival of her beautiful new crutches, poor Teecie still sat helpless in the nursery. The wooden case and its contents were hidden away, and no word was spoken of their existence.

I waited a few days to see if the elders would relent, but to no purpose. The bird still perched on its perch. No kindly hand seemed likely to open the cage door and let it fly. There sat Teecie, day after day, in her nursery chair, hemming aprons for nurse, or darning the children's stockings, looking longingly out of the window, and growing pale for want of fresh air. Still never rebelling, never complaining. Meantime the stir of Christmas preparation was agitating all the household, and the children were full of rapture at the prospect of Lady Thornton's Christmas party. There was great excitement in the nursery about pretty new dresses, wonderful fussing about ribbons, and muslins, and fripperies. Teecie alone sat silent in her shabby frock. By-and-by, her hands were full, bowing up sashes, sewing on tuckers, stitching rosettes on shoes. She was a nimble little workwoman, and they kept her busy. Seeing how well a lapful of bright ribbons be-

came her, I thought it a pity she should not have a gay dress as well as the rest.

Nobody said, "Teecie, what will you wear?" nor even, "Teecie, are not you invited too?" No one seemed to expect for a moment that Teecie could wish to be merry with the rest. How could she go, she who was lame and had no crutches?

It happened that I had an errand to the nearest town. It was rather late when, on my return, I called at the best millinery establishment in the place, and asked for a parcel.

Yes, the parcel was ready. A large flat box. "Would the gentleman like to see the lady's pretty dress?" The box was opened, and a cloud of some airy fabric shaken out under my eyes. I cannot, of course, describe it, but it was something white, very pure and transparent, with something else of pink just blushing through it. It was very tasteful, I pronounced, trying to look wise. There was only one fault: "Did it not seem rather long for a little girl?" I asked, remembering the figure it was to adorn, with its short skirt just coming to the top of the boots, so well worn and mended.

"Oh, sir," said the milliner, with dignity, "you said the young lady was eighteen years of age, and of course we have given her a flowing skirt!"

It was late in the evening when I reached home. Two merry carriage-fulls were just departing from the door as I drove up. A few minutes afterwards, I was in the nursery with the milliner's parcel in my hands. There sat dear little Cinderella, resting one flushed cheek on her hand, and contemplating the litter of scraps of ribbon, fragments of lace, scissors, flowers, and reels of cotton, which lay scattered around her. She had had a tedious tiresome day, and now they had got all they wanted of her, and had left her to her solitude.

A flash of pleasure sprang to her face when she saw me. "Oh! I thought you had gone with the rest," she said.

"No," said I, "I have not gone yet, but I am going presently. I came for you."

"For me!" she echoed in dismay. "You know I could not go. I have no dress, even if I could walk."

"A friend has sent you a dress," I said, "and I will undertake to provide the crutches. Nurse, will you please to take this box, and get Miss Teecie ready as quickly as possible. The carriage is waiting for us at the door."

Teecie flushed very red at first, and I thought she was going to burst out crying, and then she turned pale, and looked frightened. Nurse, to whom I had slipped a munificent Christmas-box, immediately fell into raptures over the pretty dress.

"Come, Teecie," I said, "make haste!" And, trembling between dread and delight, Teecie suffered herself to be carried off to her toilette.

By the time I returned from an exploring expedition, with the wonderful silver-and-tortoiseshell crutches under my arm, Teecie was ready.

Teecie was ready. Those three simple little words mean so much that I feel I must stop and

try to translate them into all they are bound to convey. They do not mean that Teecie, the child whom I was wont to call my little benefactress, my little mother, had got on a nice new frock, and was equipped for a juvenile party like other children. But they mean that there, when I came back, stood a beautiful girl by the nursery fire, in a fair sweeping blush-coloured robe. When she turned her head, I saw that the sweet face framed in its childlike curls was the same, but still the old Teecie Ray was gone, and here was (peccavi Lady Thornton!) a lovely woman.

We were all three ludicrously amazed at the sudden metamorphose that had taken place. Teecie was too simple not to show that she felt the change in herself, felt it keenly, with a strange delight and a strange shyness. Nurse had so long been accustomed to use her as a child that she stood bewildered. As for me, I was first frightened at what I had done, then enchanted, then foolishly awkward, and almost as shy as Teecie herself.

When I presented the crutches, nurse looked at me as though I must be some prince in disguise, out of the Arabian Nights. It was with a curious feeling that I saw Teecie try them, not lumping now, rather gliding over the nursery floor, with the little velvet cushions hidden away amidst clouds of lace and muslin under her round white shoulders, and the airy masses of the fresh tinted gown just crushed back a little by the gleaming silver staves. I don't know why it was that I thought at that moment, with a certain rapture, of a gumea in a little bon-bon box, that lay below in the one shabby portmanteau which I had thought proper to bring with me to Rutland Hall!

Our equipage awaited us. It was too late now to withdraw from what I had undertaken. Teecie and I were soon dashing over the snowy roads to Lady Thornton's. I will not attempt to describe the remainder of that memorable evening, or the sensation caused by our arrival; the wonder and mortification of my kind relations; or the mingled pleasure and displeasure of the hostess, who, while delighted to see her little favourite, took occasion to whisper angrily in my ear, "And pray, sir, how is all this to end?"

The scene was all new and delightful to Teecie, but her dread of Mrs. Rutland's portentous frown would not let her enjoy it. We both felt that a storm would burst over our heads that night, and we were not wrong. None of the family from Rutland Hall took the least notice of us. When the time came for going home, they went off in their two carriages, and Teecie and I drove home as we had come. When we arrived, we found Cousin George and his wife waiting for us in the library, armed to the teeth. I saw it was to be war and no quarter. Mrs. Rutland took Teecie into her clutches, and carried her off, and I was left with George. I need not repeat all that passed between us.

"Sir," he said, "we have suffered your insolent intrusion, long enough. You leave this house to-morrow morning."

"Cousin George," I said, "don't put yourself in a passion. I will go to-morrow morning, but upon one condition—that Teecie Ray may come with me, if she will."

He looked at me perfectly aghast. "Do you know," he said, "that she is a penniless friendless orphan, whom I have sheltered through charity?"

"I want to make her my wife," I said, sternly, "if, indeed, I be so fortunate as to have won her affections."

"And after that," he said, with a sneer "how do you propose to live? Upon air, or your friends?"

"Not upon you, George Rutland," I said, looking him steadily in the eyes. "Mark me. I have tried you out. I have sifted you, all in this house, like a handful of wheat. I found you all chaff, but the one golden grain which lies on my palm. I will keep it and treasure it, if I may. God grant I may!"

"Very fine," said George, "very fine. Remember, however, that from this moment I wash my hands of you both: you, Guy Rutland, and her, Teecie Ray."

"Amen!" I said, and bade him good night, and turned on my heel and left him.

Early next morning I knocked at the nursery door, and begged of nurse to awake Miss Teecie, and ask her to speak with me in the garden. I then went out to wait for her. It was Christmas morning, the day of peace and good will. What I felt was scarcely peace, as I looked over the calm landscape. And yet I bore no ill will to any man or woman.

Teecie came to me by-and-by; just the same old Teecie, limping over the frosty path in her short shabby frock, and looking half ashamed of her grand new crutches. I felt relieved when I saw her so. I was shy of the dainty lady whom I had called into existence the night before. And yet when I looked more closely, I knew that this was not quite the old Teecie, and that the very same Teecie of a day ago never, never, could come back. Something was altered. Whether the change was in her or me, or in both of us, I did not inquire. The change was not an unpleasant one.

We strolled out of the garden, and into the lane, and we talked earnestly all the way. On our way back I said:

"And you're not afraid of starving with me, Teecie? You'll take the risk?"

One of her old nods was Teecie's answer.

"Go and fetch your hat, then," said I, "and we won't even wait for breakfast. Don't bring anything else with you, not a shred. I have still some halfpence left—out of the guinea, you know—and we'll get all we want."

Teecie fetched her hat and returned, and we set off together. An hour afterwards we were man and wife. We said our prayers side by side in the church, and then we walked back to Rutland Hall, to say good-by to our kinsfolk. I believe they all thought me mad, and her a little fool;—at least until Cousin George received the cheque, which I sent him next day; a cheque to cover the expenses

incurred by him through his charity to Teecie Ray. Then they began to wonder, and to waver. I took my wife abroad, and showed her the world. Time and care cured her of her lameness. It was not surprising that on her return to England her kinsfolk should scarcely recognise her—Teecie Rutland, née Ray—walking without crutches, and the wife of a millionaire! Half a bride-cake conciliated Lady Thornton, and the wonderful guinea is still in my possession. I call it Teecie's dower. The crutches, the donor of which I beg to assure you, major, was *not* Sir Harry, are also preserved as family curiosities.

IV.

ANOTHER FAST LODGER RELATES

WHAT LOT HE DREW AT GLUMPER HOUSE.

If the dietary at Doctor Glumper's could not be pronounced purely Spartan in its principles, it was simply that the Spartan stomach—well disciplined as we know it to have been—would have revolted at such treatment. Salamis demanded other stamina than could be supplied by the washings of a beef-bone. Xerxes was not deified under the immediate inspiration of rice-dumping.

Doctor Glumper's was not much worse, in its commissariat, my dear Major Jackman, than hundreds of other establishments, at which—in those days—the sons of gentlemen studied and starved. There was enough to live upon, provided we could have fairly eaten what there *was*. Therein lay the difficulty. Our meals, bad enough at the beginning of the week, grew gradually worse towards the end; inasmuch that we arrived at the Sabbath, much in the condition of a band of young seafarers, who had been cast away, and were only saved from utter starvation by the opportune arrival of a ship freighted with roast-beef and Yorkshire pudding.

True, there was a life-boat. It's name, in our case, was "Hannah's Basket." Hannah was the laundress, and, on Saturday afternoon, after delivering the linen, regularly made her appearance in the playground, displaying the bottom of her buck-basket paved with delicacies, carefully selected on the principle of combining the three grand qualities of sweetness, stickiness, and economy.

Elegance and refinement were little thought of, in those days. The boy who brought a silver fork, would have been simply regarded as possessed of a jocular turn. As for the spoon and six towels, which, according to the printed terms of Glumper House, seemed absolutely essential to a sound classical education—the spoon found its way into a species of armoury of Mrs. Glumper's, formed of the spoils of the young Philistines, her pupils, prohibited toys, confiscated literature, and so forth; while the towels, absorbed in the general republic of that article, passed into indiscriminate use. Well, we had nothing to say against steel forks. The

meat, peradventure, might have proved impervious to any less undaunted metal.

Our Monday's dinner was boiled leg of mutton. One helping. More was not refused; but the ill-concealed impatience with which the application was received, established the custom of contenting ourselves with what was first supplied. The due reward of this pusillanimity appeared on the following day, in the form of half-consumed joints—cold, ghastly, scamed with red murderous streaks, and accompanied by certain masses of ill-washed cabbage, interesting as an entomological study; but, as a viand, repulsive by reason of the caterpillars, whose sodden dull-green corpses I have seen lying in ranks beside the plates of fastidious feeders.

Three days a week, we had rice-pudding—a confection which, by an unfortunate conjuncture of circumstances, I never could from infancy endure; but the great trial of our lives, and stomachs, was reserved for Saturday, when we sat down to what was satirically styled a “beef-steak-pie.”

Mean and debased must be the spirit of that bullock who would confess to any share in such a production! Into the composition of that dish beef entered as largely as the flesh of the unicorn into peas-porridge. The very wildness of the rumours that were afloat respecting its actual origin proved how dark, difficult, and mysterious was the inquiry. School tradition pointed to the most grotesque and inharmonious elements, as actually detected in the pie. Substances, in texture, flavour, and appearance, the reverse of bovine, had been over and over again deposed to by the dismayed recipients, who proved their good faith by preferring famine itself to “beef-steak”-pie. The utter impossibility of identifying the ingredients as having pertained to any animal recognised by British cooks, was the terrific feature of the case.

Whatever was the prevailing element of the pie, it was supplemented with minor matters, about which, though they do not appear in any accepted recipe for the dish in question, there could be no dispute.

Sholto Shullito, for instance, who had the appetite of an ogre, boldly swallowed the portion assigned him, but quietly and sterily removed to the side of his plate three fingers and a ligament of the thumb of an ancient dog-skin glove.

Billy Duntze discovered and secreted something that was for several halves preserved in the school as the leg of a flamingo. At all events, it was introduced, so labelled, to every new arrival, on the very first evening of his sojourn among us.

George van Kempen found a pair of snufflers.

Charley Brooksbank remarked a singular protuberance in his portion of pie, and, carefully excavating the same, as if it were a Phœnician relic, brought to light something that looked like the head of a doll that had been afflicted with hydrocephalus. On being cut into, it was green. For the first few weeks of each half—that is, while our pocket-money held out—we got on

pretty well. Our pocket-money exhausted, starvation stared us in the face.

The present generation may wonder why we did not try the effect of respectful remonstrance. The times, as I have said, were different then, and besides, the present generation didn't personally know Mrs. Glumper. A fearful woman was Mrs. Glumper. I don't mean that she raved, struck, or demeaned herself in any way not ordinarily witnessed in polite society; but I do mean that she had a cool quiet scorn, a consciousness of a putting-down power, as though an elephant, just tickling the ground with a foot as big as a writing-table, were to show how easily and effectually he might, if he pleased, turn that table upon you.

In addition to this overbearing contempt, Mrs. Glumper had a thousand ways of making us uncomfortable, without resorting to overt tyranny; inasmuch that to be “out of favour” with that excellent lady was regarded as the climax of school misery.

Not a word have I to say against the doctor. Even then I felt him to be a good man. In remembering his character, I believe him to have been one of the best that ever breathed. With the understanding of a sage, he was as simple as a child; so simple, that it was matter of genuine astonishment that he retained the coat upon his back; so simple, that the circumstance of his having espoused Mrs. G. became almost intelligible. For this guileless act, rumour even supplied the motive. Mrs. Glumper, then Miss Kittiewinkle, was herself the mistress of an extremely preparatory school, and it was in the cowed and miserable victims of her Muscovite rule that the kind doctor read an invitation of the most pressing kind, to take the mistress under his. The consequence of this union of interests was, that the establishment, losing its infantine character, flourished up into a school of seventy boys; only the very smallest of whom were submitted to Mrs. Glumper's immediate dominion.

Affairs were in this unsatisfactory position towards the middle of a certain half. It was precisely the period at which the greatest impetuosity usually prevailed. Money was tighter than any one could recollect. Hannah's bread-stuffs were in a condition of blockade. Could “shirtings” have been exchanged for catings, Hannah might have done a brisk business in turn-downs, but the old lady was too wary for such traffic.

We held a consultation. The doctor's cow, which sometimes grazed in the playing-field, was incidentally present, and by her sleek contented aspect, excited universal disgust.

“Crib her oilcake!” squeaked a voice from the outer senatorial circle.

“It is well for the honourable felon on the back benches,” remarked our president, Jack Rogers, who delighted to give to our consultations the aspect of a grave debate, “that his skull is beyond punching-distance. If the oilcake, lavished, on yonder pampered animal, had-

been vested in trustees, to the sole and separate use, notwithstanding coverture, of *Mrs. Glumper*—I—well, I will go so far as to say this council might have taken into consideration what has fallen from the distinguished thief. But it's *Glumper's*, and the proposal of the estimable criminal will be received with the contempt it deserves."

A murmur of approval greeted this speech, after which sundry suggestions were offered.

Burned pens (Gus Halfacre remarked) were edible. He *might* say, toothsome.

"My left boot is at the service of the commonwealth," said Frank Lightfoot. "The right, having been recently repaired and thickened, and being devoid of a large nail in the sole (of which I invite the state to take heed), I reserve to myself for the last extremity."

"Thus extremes *will* meet," observed the president. "But this is no season for jesting. Has anybody anything to propose?"

"We have always Murrell Robinson," said Sholto Shillito, gloomily, and with an aspect so wolfish, that the young gentleman alluded to—a plump rosy child of eight, who had not yet had time to dwindle—set up a howl of terror.

"It might—humph—yes, it might be politic," said the chairman, thoughtfully. "Twould touch her home. If Jezebel *Glumper* lost a couple, say, of pupils, under the peculiar circumstances glanced at by the honourable senator in the inky corduroys, she might have some—shall I say bowels?—for those of the remainder. But the observation of my honourable friend has suggested to my mind a course of action which, though in some respects similar, and promising the like results, is not open to the same objections. Some fellow must *bolt*, placing on record his reasons for that step."

Jack's proposal, unexpected as it was, met with considerable favour, the only difficulty being to decide who the fugitive should be. Bolting from school by no means implied return to the paternal mansion. Everybody looked inquiringly at his neighbour. No one volunteered.

The chairman surveyed us with mournful severity.

"There was once," he faltered, "an individual, known to you all (except the fifth class)—wept over by some—who, on learning that he might greatly benefit certain public property by jumping into a hole, asked no questions, popped in, and did it. Has our school no Curtius? Must seventy stomachs languish unsatisfied for want of a single heart? Shillito, you greedy young beggar, *you* will go."

Mr. Shillito emphatically invoked benediction on himself, in the event of his doing anything of the kind.

"Percy Pobjoy," said the president, "you are one at odds with fortune. You are penniless—worse, for your week's pay, old chap, is impounded for a month. You have sailed into the extreme north of *Mrs. Glumper's* favour, and are likely to make it your persistent abode. You detest rice.

You have scruples concerning caterpillars. Percival, my friend, three ladies of eminence, whose names and office are fully recorded in your classical dictionary, unanimously select *you* as the party to perform this public service."

Mr. Pobjoy regretted to run counter to the anticipations of *any* lady, but, possessing, as he did, a grandmother who would, he conceived, prove more than a match for the three Destinies—and he would throw the Furies in—he must deny himself the gratification proposed.

"Then," resumed the president, cheerfully, with the air of having at last secured his man, "I at once address myself to the distinguished senator on the inverted flower-pot. He who licked that bully, the miller's boy, in twelve minutes and a half, will be again our champion. Joles will go."

Mr. Joles somewhat sullenly failed to perceive the analogy between pitching into a cheery clown, and running away from school. Could the honourable president detect the smallest indication of verdure in his (Mr. J.'s) sinister organ of vision? Such a contingency was, nevertheless, essential to his (Mr. J.'s) adopting the course required of him.

Other honourable senators having, when appealed to, returned answers of a no less discouraging character, there seemed to be but one course remaining—that of drawing lots. A resolution to do this was carried, after some discussion: it being agreed that he on whom the lot might fall should decamp on the morrow, and, having found some secure hiding-place, write to one of his schoolmates, or (perhaps preferably) to his own friends, declaring that the step he had taken was prompted by a reluctance to perish of starvation.

The proposed time was subsequently extended to one week, in order that he who drew the fatal lot might have time to try the effect of a touching appeal to his parents or friends, fairly setting forth the treatment we were experiencing. If this answered, well and good. If not, the honourable gentleman (said our chief) "will cut his lucky this day se'nnight."

Lots were then solemnly drawn, in the primitive Homeric fashion, every boy's name—those of the fifth class excepted—being inscribed in a slip of paper, and flung into a hat. There was a strong feeling in favour of exempting Jack Rogers, our president—the Nestor of the school—who, being near seventeen, and about to leave, would, no doubt, have preferred fighting through the remainder of his term, famish as he might. But the good fellow flounced at the idea, as though it had been an insult, and himself cast in his name.

Carefully following our classic model, the hat was then violently shaken. The lot that, in obedience to a filip from the Fates, first leaped out and touched the earth, was to decide the question. *Two* flew out, but one of these rested on the shaker's sleeve. There was a decided disinclination to take up the other. It seemed as if nobody had, until this supreme crisis, fully realised

the consequences that might ensue from thus abandoning at once both school and home.

My heart, I confess, stood still for a moment, as Jack Rogers stood forward and picked up the paper. Then I felt the blood mount to my cheeks, as our leader slowly read, "Charles Stuart Trelawny."

"Always in luck, Charley!" he continued, laughing; but I think Jack only intended to keep up my spirits. "Write directly, my boy," he added, in a graver tone, "and, take my advice, write bang up to the governor. Treat it as a matter of business. Mamma is safe to put in *her* word."

I wrote at once:

"My dear Papa,—I hope you are quite well. I ain't. You know I'm not greedy, and not so foolish as to expect at school such jolly things as at home. So you must not be angry when I say what I'm *obliged* to say, that we can't eat what Mrs. Glumper says is dinner; and as there's nothing else but slop and a bit of bread, everybody's starving.

"I remain, your dutiful Son,

"C. S. TRELAWNY.

"P.S. If you don't like to speak to Mrs. Glumper, would you mind asking mamma and Agnes, with my love, to send me a big loaf of bread (with Crust, and, if possible, browned) that might last a week?

"Lieut.-Gen. Trelawny, C.B., K.H.,
Penrhyn Court."

I thought this despatch sufficiently business-like, and waited with some anxiety for the result. If papa only knew what depended on his decision! He *ought* to put faith in me, for I had never been untruthful, and had done myself no more than justice in reminding him that I was no glutton.

It was, I believe, on the fourth day of suspense that a large parcel was brought into the playground, a crowd of curious and expectant youths escorting it, and witnessing its delivery. Small blame to them!

There resided within the limits of that parcel—for, though mighty, it *had* its limits—first, a beefsteak-pie, not only composed of real beef, but enriched with eggs and minor excellences, all trembling in a jellied gravy of surpassing savour. There was, secondly, a chosen company of mince-pies, clinging together from sheer richness, in such wise that a very stoic, if hungry, might be reluctant to "sever such sweet friends," and devour them two at a time.

There was revealed, in the third place, a large apple turnover: so called, I should surmise, because a boy might turn it over and over, and back again, and, after all, find himself unable to determine which looked the more enticing—the sugary, or the buttery side. And, finally, there was a cake which I can scarcely repent having characterised, at the moment, as "tremendous!"

There was no letter, but the anxiety seemed good. Such ambassadors as pies and turnovers speak with tongues of their own. It was *not* intended that we should perish. We should see

the effect of my manly and business-like appeal, perhaps that very day, in an improved bill of fare, and a diminution of caterpillars. As to husbanding our new supplies, such an idea never occurred to any one. Alas, that we could not *all* partake! Lots had to be once more drawn, and a lucky party of eighteen, with Jack Rogers and myself, honorary, made extremely short work of the parcel.

Shade follows sunshine. There was no amelioration of the accustomed fare at dinner; but a decided cloud on Mrs. Glumper's haughty brow was interpreted favourably by Jack—a close observer of human nature—as evincing her disgust at the costly reform to which she saw herself committed.

Alas! for once, our leader was wrong. Not that day, nor the following day, nor any other day, so long as that establishment survived, was there any departure from the time-(dis)honoured rules of diet.

It was long before I came into possession of the state papers actually exchanged on this occasion. Premising that my father, busied with his other letters, had handed over mine to my mother, saying, "Do see to this, my dear," here they are:

The Lady Caroline Trelawny to Mrs. Glumper.

"Dear Mrs. Glumper,—I trust that the size of the parcel I forward to my boy, will not alarm you. Charley is growing very rapidly, so rapidly, indeed, that his father drew my attention to the circumstance, not without some misgiving that he might outgrow his strength. You may smile at the anxiety that prompts me to remind one so experienced as yourself in the care of youth, that good, clean, and sufficient food is more than ever necessary to my tall boy. He is not a dainty boy, and the conditions I have mentioned will, I am sure, meet all that he, or I, on his behalf, could desire. With compliments to Dr. Glumper, I am, dear Mrs. Glumper, sincerely yours,

"CAROLINE M. TRELAWNY."

Mrs. Glumper to the Lady Caroline Trelawny.

"Dear Madam,—Perhaps the most satisfactory answer I can make to your obliging note will be conveyed in the assurance that Dr. Glumper, myself, our family, and the masters (except Monsieur Legoumet, who insists on providing his own meals), live invariably with, and as, our boys; and that, in the matter of food, there is neither stint nor compulsion.

"Respectfully yours,

"JEZEBEL GLUMPER."

There was, unfortunately, just sufficient colouring of truth in this to satisfy the consciences of both ladies. They *did* dine, or rather sit down, with us, and being helped first to the tit-bits, accompanied with hot gravy and et ceteras, at their own cross-table, got on pretty well. As for the good old doctor, he was the most innocent of accomplices in promoting our starvation. He simply did as his wife decreed, caring nothing for himself, and would have starved with his boys, without a murmur.

a grenade. It was useless, however, to attempt to enlighten her further. Phil confessed as much, and owned that we must take our chance.

He introduced me to the dark passage and private entrance, and presenting me with the key, took his leave, assuring me that no one would enter the apartment until evening, when he would himself bring me supper, bear me company at that meal, and hear how I had felt my way.

When, a few minutes later, I turned into Jew's-road, the sensation of not belonging to myself came back rather strongly, bringing with it a brother sensation, still less soothing—that of not, for the moment, belonging to anybody else! Nevertheless, I held up my head, and marched on as confidently as if I expected an influential friend to meet me by appointment at the next corner.

How—*how* did people begin? Usually, I thought, with some happy incident. Would any obliging infant, of high birth, do me the favour to be nearly run over? Any stout gentleman—victim to casual orange-peel—trip and be picked up by me? Any hurrying man of commerce let fall a book containing securities of inestimable value, close to my feet? No; most of these things had had their turn. Fortune scorns to repeat herself. I had a conviction that I must begin at the foot of the ladder. "He" (some great man) "once swept a barber's shop," was a legend of my childhood. Where was such a barber?

"Wanted, a Lad."

It came like an answer. Were these characters *real*? If so, Fortune—though she writes an indifferent hand—has not deserted me. I am a lad. And wanted. Behold me!

I entered the establishment. It wasn't a barber's. Greasier. Pigs' toes, I imagine, prevailed. "What can I do for *you*, young gentleman?" inquired the stout white-aproned proprietor, brandishing an immense knife.

"Please, do you want a lad?" I asked.

The man looked at me from head to foot. Then he said:

"We *did*, but unfortunately we only takes six parlour-boarders at a time; and the Markiss o' Queefinch has just grabbed the last vacancy for his seventeenth son."

"I—I want to be a lad, sir," I faltered.

"Lookce here, young gentleman; if you don't want none of *my* trotters, use your own, or you'll get *me* into a scrape as well as yourself. Now, off with you!"

Twice more, tempted by similar announcements, I ventured to prefer my claims, but with no better success. One glance at my exterior seemed to satisfy everybody that I was not the lad for *them*. Yes, I was too smart! The recent runaway was visible in my still glossy blue jacket and gilt buttons; not to mention the snowy turn-down. I was not sorry when evening came, that I might return home, and recount my adventures to the sympathising Phil.

Philip agreed that I was *not*, perhaps, exactly the sort of messenger a struggling tripe-seller would select, but suggested that I might fly at

higher game. Why not feel my way among classes to whom a gentlemanly appearance and manner did *not* form an insuperable objection?

Why not, indeed? Time was precious. Mrs. Swigsby's misgivings were evidently on the increase. I would do it to-morrow.

"Right, my boy," said Phil, as he bade me good night. "Straight, now, to the fountain head, you know."

I *didn't* exactly know. Feeling one's way, and going to the fountain head—though admirable as general principles—were, not so easy of application. Where *was* the fountain head?

"In your great banking and commercial firms," Phil had said, over our wine; "always deal with Principals."

My friend evidently assumed that I should seek out parties of this description. Accordingly, selecting from the Directory the names of a very eminent City banking firm, I "felt my way" towards their distant domicile, and found myself in the presence of about fifty clerks—all busily employed. After standing for some time unnoticed, I approached one of the desks.

"Please, sir, I want your head."

"My *what*?" inquired the clerk, with considerable energy. "What do you want with my head?"

I explained that I meant his Principal; the head of the firm: whereupon the clerk smiled languidly.

"Mr. Ingott's down at Goldborough Park," he said, "but if it's anything about the Turkish Loan, we'll send an express. He can be here to-morrow."

I assured him it had nothing to do with the Turkish Loan, or any loan, and that any other partner of the house would do as well.

The clerk nodded, whispered to another clerk, and desiring me to follow, led the way through a labyrinth of desks, into an inner room, where sat an old gentleman reading the paper. He looked at me inquiringly through his gold eyeglasses. The clerk whispered—and—

"Well, my young friend?" said the old banker.

"Pl—please, sir," I blurted out, "do you want a confidential lad?"

The clerk titlered; but the old gentleman, with one look, dismissed him, and proceeded:

"Who sent you hither, my boy, and what do you mean?"

His manner was very kind, so I told him at once, that nobody sent me; that, acting upon advice, I was engaged in feeling my way, and wished to begin by being a lad—a *confidential* lad, if possible; that, with that view, I had come straight to the fountain head; that, being, I must confess, at variance with my friends, I could not mention whence I came, but that he might rely upon my honesty; and that I was prepared, if necessary, to deposit in the hands of the firm a certain sum of money, as an indemnification for any losses that might be incurred through my inexperience.

The old gentleman inquired the amount.

"Two-and-sixpence."

I saw his eye twinkle; then, as if a sudden thought had struck him, he put his hand upon my shoulder and turned me to the light.

"Hem—I thought so," I fancied I heard him mutter. Then he added aloud: "See here, my lad. I cannot make so important an engagement on my own responsibility. I must consult my partners in the firm. Sit down in the messenger's room—that door yonder. In half an hour I will give you your answer."

In the messenger's room I found a respectable-looking youth, eating bread-and-cheese. He offered me some, but I could not eat. Kind as the old gentleman's manner was, there was something in it that gave me uneasiness. It almost seemed as if he knew me.

"Who," I asked the messenger, "is that old gentleman who said he must consult his partners?"

"Sir Edward Goldshore—him that lives at Bilton Abbey, near Penrhyn."

"Penrhyn? General Trelawny's?"

"That, sir, is the ticket. The general often hunches here when he's in town. Consult his partners, did the governor say? Why, they're all out of town but *him*!"

"Don't you," I asked, faintly, "think this room of yours rather hot? I'll—take a run—and—come back before I'm wanted."

Ere the youth could start any objections I had vanished.

That unlucky day was doomed to an unluckier close. Concannon made his appearance in the harness-room with a somewhat harassed face.

"It's a bore, my dear old fellow, but I fear your camp must be broken up. There's no trusting old Swigshy. You must move on, Charley, my boy, and, if you won't go sleek home, like a reasonable chap, feel your way in other quarters."

There was, obviously, no alternative. I marched on the following morning. But Phil's good offices did not cease until he had seen me established in a (very humble) lodging not far distant, but in a locality where I could continue to feel my way without much chance of recognition. The rent—five shillings a week—Phil at first insisted on paying; but, on my representation that the acceptance of any money and might vitiate my entire future, the kind fellow consented to purchase, at full value, such articles of my wardrobe as would supply me with all that was necessary for an entire week, leaving my half-crown still intact.

Thus was I, for the second time, adrift. Fortune kept steadily aloof. Go whither, ask whom, I would, the same suspicious look invariably greeted me. Whether I brushed my jacket neatly, or tore experimental holes in the elbows, it seemed that I could never hit the desired medium between gentility and vagabondism.

I shall not describe at length those miserable days, nor the steady diminution of my hopes and resources, until the middle of the second week found me, with my rent paid, indeed, but destitute of everything save the clothes I stood in, and *sixpence!*

I had given up in despair all search for employment. Go home I would not. Of Phil I had heard nothing, and I feared to compromise him by any overt communication. What was to be done?

One morning, I was prowling feebly about, *very* hungry, and, every now and then, feeling the sixpence in my jacket-pocket, as though the very sight of a cook-shop might have drawn it forth, when I noticed an old Jew seated on the lower steps of a house. He was not a neat or a well-washed Jew. I don't think that I ever in after life beheld a dirtier; but my attention was drawn to him by the demeanour of a poltboy, who, in passing, had muttered, "Old chap's sewn up!" and whistled on two fingers, almost over the man's head, a pean of congratulation upon the circumstance.

The old Jew looked faintly up. The face, though grimy, was not, I thought, ignoble; and, indifferent whither I strolled, I turned to take another look at him. He was very old, very ragged, and, to all appearance, famine-stricken; at least, I never saw hunger written so legibly in any face, except my own. He made a languid motion with his fingers towards me, like a dying creature, but did not beg, and I passed on my way. Suddenly, the thought shot across me, "Should the old man *die*?"

The sixpence seemed to give a spontaneous leap in my pocket, as though inspired with the same idea. Back I went, wavering, for, if I yielded to charitable impulse, what must I myself do? If he would divide it with me—but how ask a dying man for change? I passed him again.

Either my fancy misled me, or the sixpence gave me a discontented punch in the side. "*But*," I answered, as though in remonstrance with it, "you, are the last hope of my fortune; in giving *you*, I part with millions—two millions." A last emphatic punch determined me. I turned once more, walked hastily back, and dropped my two millions into the old man's hand!

How I got through the remainder of that day I hardly know. It was about dusk, when, growing every moment more faint and desponding, I turned to crawl homeward. I was pausing unconsciously before a baker's window, when a hand touched my shoulder. It was my Jew. The old man had changed considerably for the better, and now, of the two, looked far the more alive.

"Good rolls those," said the old Jew, approvingly. "Hungry?"

Almost too weary to speak, I nodded.

"And—no money?" asked the old man, with curious eagerness.

I shook my head, and prepared to move away.

"I—I spent that sixpence," resumed the Jew, "but if you don't despise a poor man's haunt, I'll give you a supper, and, if you need it, lodging too. My castle is close at hand."

I looked at him with surprise, and followed him. Falling into a sort of mendicant gait, he shuffled feebly on, and, turning into a dark narrow street, composed of very small tenements

indeed, paused at one of the nearest, and struck upon the window-sill with his crutch-stick.

"Take hold of my coat when she opens the door," said the old Jew. "You may find it darkish below."

It was darkish, insomuch that the "she" who opened to us was invisible in the gloom, but a silver voice, that was not the Jew's, uttered an exclamation of welcome, and died away, like a spirit's, into some upper region, whither we stumbled in pursuit. A candle-end, dimly flickering in the corner, revealed our conductress in the person of a girl of about fifteen, attired in a thick white robe which covered her from neck to foot, and seemed, so far as I might presume to judge, to be her only garment. The large sleeves were turned back to the elbows, as if she had been engaged in household work, and the inaudibility of her movements was accounted for by her feet being bare. A broad white fillet tied back immense masses of dark brown hair. The face! Boy as I was, and a very sleepy and exhausted one—I was roused at once into a state of stupid ecstasy by one glance at her marvellous beauty. "Is it a woman? Is it a woman?" I remember gasping, as it were, to myself. And as she stood, for a few seconds, motionless, her form and dress like sculpture, her white arms extended towards me in questioning surprise, I felt as if it would be no sin to fall at her feet, in adoration of what seemed more of Heaven than earth.

"Supper, Zell," said the old Jew, and darkness fell upon the scene. Zell had vanished.

The rest of that evening was a blank, with passing gleams of Paradise. Fatigue and inanition forced me to sleep, even while striving to eat. But, in those intervals of glory, I was conscious of sitting at a feast, between the Queen of the Fairies, and an exceedingly ragged old Hebrew, whom she addressed as grandfather; sensible that the latter (speaking as though I had been absent) told the former a story about me and a sixpence, which seemed to be amusing; aware, finally, that Queen Titania remarked, in a pitying voice:

"The child! He ought to be in bed!" And, without further ceremony, put me there.

My couch was on the floor of that same apartment, and the last thing I remember was Titania's foot, so small, so purely white, so bluely veined, withal so near my lips, that I would have kissed it, if I dared—but went to sleep while thinking of it.

My rest was so profound, that, when I awoke to another day, Zell and her grandfather were finishing breakfast. Both were dressed as on the preceding day; the old man, with his squalid aspect, tattered garments, and rusty shoes, offering a strange contrast to the bewitching creature, fresh and sweet as a dewy moss-rose, who sat beside him. If her beauty had asserted itself in the semi-darkness overnight, the full light of day only confirmed it more. The countenance was unquestionably of the Jewish order, but of the richest tint, the most refined and delicate mould. I lay in a sort of joyful stupor, utterly unable to remove

my eyes from the glorious object. If love were ever born at eleven years old, here was the nativity of a passion that could never die. O, angel!—Zell suddenly discovered that I was awake.

After bringing me some tea, she quitted the room, and the old man came and sat down beside me. Having questioned me about my home and friends—to which I candidly replied that I had, at present, none to speak of, being engaged in simply feeling my way—he went on:

"You have been frank with me, my boy. I'll be frank with you. Though a very poor, poor man—oh, a *very* poor man—I am not, as you supposed, a beggar. I have means of living, such as they are, but these compel me to be much from home. My granddaughter, my Zell (what fool gave her that name I know not; she is called Zeruah), has neither relation nor friend. For reasons I cannot now explain, she never quits this house. My heart bleeds at the solitude to which I am forced to condemn her. Stay with us, child, for a while. You shall have board and lodging, it may be some trifle over, when times are good. You can go on messages for Zell, and help her in the house. What say you?"

If the old gentleman had intimated that the reversion of the crown of England awaited my acceptance, my heart would have throbbled with far less exultant joy! *Stay with her! See her! Serve her! Be her blessed thrall!*

What I replied, I know not. I only know that ten minutes later the old gentleman had shuffled forth, and I, washing teacups under the eye of my beautiful mistress, had broken one, and received a box on the ear, delivered without any ceremony whatever. Zell was evidently as impulsive as she was beautiful. Presuming on her immense seniority of four years, the young lady made no more account of me than if I had been a kitten.

The room we sat in, and a little nook above, where Zell slept, were, like herself, scrupulously clean: all the remainder of the mansion being apparently given fairly over to decay and dirt. Our slender meals were prepared in the sitting-room, and provided from a daily sum, of I should think about fourpence-halfpenny, doled out by the lord of the mansion before leaving. My lady would instruct me where and how to invest this capital to the greatest advantage, and, according to my success, reward me on my return with a radiant smile, or a sounding box on the ear.

Mistress Zell seldom making me the recipient of her thoughts and words, it was by slow degrees that I learned the following particulars: That my host, Mr. Moses Jeremiah Abrahams, was a gentleman of habits so penurious, that he might have rivalled, if not eclipsed, the most illustrious misers of the age, had he only possessed anything to hoard. That Zell was dressed as I beheld her, to preclude the possibility of her going forth—to incur expenses—in the public ways. (As, sitting on the ground, while she told me this, I looked up in my lady's glorious eyes, it struck me that the old man might have had a tenderer

reason.) That Mr. Abrahams, absent, most days, till dark, was, on certain days, later still. Finally, that I must not be surprised if, on one or more of those days, I heard his signal on the window-sill, but not himself on the stairs. "And soe to you!" concluded my lady, threatening me with her little hand, "if you betray our secret!"

"Our!" My heart turned faint, I caught her meaning instantly, and experienced the first burning touch of jealousy. My mistress had a lover.

"What makes you colour so, you stupid foolish boy?" said my lady, half laughing, half angry. "Can we trust you, or can we not?"

I stammered some nonsense about being at her command, body and soul. And I have no doubt I meant it.

My devotion was soon tested. That very evening (one of Mr. Abrahams' late ones) a knock, like his, sounded on the window-sill. Zell, bidding me follow, flew down stairs, and, softly opening the window, was clasped in the embrace of an individual to all appearance as ragged and infirm of mien as her grandfather himself.

For a moment she suffered this, then drew back, leaving the visitor her hand, which that monster, whoever he was, seemed to devour with kisses. There ensued a whispered conversation, during which I observed that the speakers referred to me. Then, as if alarmed by a signal from without, the stranger vanished. We returned up-stairs.

Next morning my mistress gave me a note without address. I was to take it to a particular shop, and give it to a particular stranger who would accost me. No particular stranger was there. Afraid to return without fulfilling my mission, I was lingering over some trifling purchase, when a phaeton dashed up to the door, and a gentleman entered the shop. He was very handsome, wore thick black moustaches carefully curled, had long gilt spurs, and looked like an officer. He was well known to the shop-people, for he tossed about a number of articles, laughing and jesting with the mistress, but purchased nothing. Could *this* be my man? I managed, at all events, to let him see what I was carrying. We left the shop together.

"Toss it over! Quick, my lad!" said the gentleman, sharply. "Take this, and *this*" (he gave me another note, and half-a-crown). "And meet me here to-morrow."

I told him I did not want his money, but would take his note. He looked at me, uttered a long low whistle—expressive, I take it, of astonishment—and drove away.

The joy in my sweet mistress's eyes, and a white hand stroking my curls, even while she read the letter, were a sufficient reward. Then she made me her confidant. Her suitor was Lord John Loveless, son of the proud Earl of St. Buryans, with whom, owing to some little financial misunderstanding, poor Lord John was, for the moment, on terms so far from satisfactory, as to render it improbable that the earl would

yield anything like a cordial assent to his son's union with the granddaughter of an impoverished Jew. Hence the necessity for those clandestine interviews, which my mistress atoned for to her conscience, by sternly forbidding her lover ever to cross the threshold.

My lord was at the shop next morning as soon as I.

He took me familiarly by the arm.

"Come and take a pull on the river, boy. I want to have a talk with you."

It was not far to the river. We got a boat, and pulled off, my companion chatting pleasantly enough. At last he said:

"That old governor of yours keeps you pretty short, I take it? What does he do, now, with his money? Do you never hear him counting his guineas? Come!"

I positively denied it, and gave such candid reasons for my conviction that he was all but a pauper, that my companion seemed staggered. He became grave, not to say morose, and the row home seemed to bore him. I did not report to my lady all that had passed between us; I could not have left out his bad spirits when I described to him her poverty, and that might have pained her.

After this, my lord's visits became less frequent, and my mistress's smiles rarer. She moved about with a slower and a sadder step; and sometimes sat with her marble arms crossed on her lap, until I almost doubted if she lived. At which times, I would creep into the field of her eye, if but to change its fixed expression.

A terrible event came to rouse her. The old gentleman was brought home, one night, dying. He had been hustled, knocked down, and robbed, by some miscreants in the street. Though he had sustained no injury that should ordinarily prove mortal, the shock to his system, and, still more, the alleged robbery to which he perpetually referred, combined to give him *the* grave. In spite of medical efforts he sank fast, and, at midnight, died.

My mistress, who had never left his side, bore all with a strange patience. I never saw her weep, but her white face and gleaming eyes struck me with awe.

A will, duly executed, was found, in which the old man, in general terms, bequeathed to his granddaughter, Zeruiah Abrahams, everything of which he should die possessed, appointing one Lemuel Samuelson guardian and executor. What money the old man had about him, when robbed, was never known. All the coin in the house amounted to no more than sufficed to pay the medical attendant, while the furniture was probably not worth more than twenty or thirty pounds. Part of this, with the assistance of a neighbour, we sold, to spare the old man a pauper's funeral; the rest, we thought, would provide clothes for Zell (since we must *both* now go out and feel our way), and support us *both* until we found our way. When this was done, the house looked desolate and wretched enough, and my

poor mistress scarcely less so. Though she never spoke of it, the desertion of her lover—of whom in all that distressful time we never heard—cut her to the heart's core.

One day, before her clothes came, as I was moving restlessly about the room, thinking what I could say to comfort her, she suddenly lifted her head:

"Charley, will *you* desert me, too?"

"Zell! 'Desert you!'" Like a young fool, as I was, I burst into a passion of tears.

"Don't—don't! My dear child—my good child!" And, infected by my tears, poor Zell laid her head on the table and wept aloud.

Almost at that moment my eye was caught by an urchin in the street, beckoning eagerly. Stammering some excuse, I ran out.

"Gem' giv' me a bob," said the boy, "fur to say as he's a waitin' at the corner."

At the corner; or, more correctly, *round* it, stood Lord John Lovelless.

"Now, my boy," said his lordship, very hurriedly, "I am here at great risk to—to myself, and have only a moment to stay. About your mistress? Is she well? Is she cared for? Did the old fellow *really* die a beggar?"

I replied, that the old gentleman had neither lived nor died a beggar, but that we had no money, and intended to feel our way towards work, as soon as we could go out.

Lord John seemed struck at this, and made an irresolute movement in the direction of the house.

"Won't you come in?" I forced myself to say.

"N—no," was the reply. "I can't. Urgent business elsewhere. See, boy. Give her this. Say I have been absent with my regiment, or I'd have sent before."

And, if ever noble gentleman skulked away, I think Lord John did.

Kneeling at my sweet mistress's feet, I faithfully recounted the interview. Zell listened, without once removing her eyes from mine. Then she said: "Put his—his wretched alms—into a cover, and take it to the address I shall write." All which was duly done.

But, the events of the day were not over. As we sat towards evening, discussing projects for the morrow, a stranger somewhat peremptorily demanded admittance, and, in company with another individual who had apparently been lurking aloof, produced some papers, and declared himself in possession of the house. He was our landlord. Our rent was deeply in arrear. His applications and threats having been alike disregarded by the eccentric Mr. Abrahams, he had taken the necessary steps to resume possession, and now came, inspired with an intense hatred (as he openly declared) for all Jew tenants, to enforce his rights.

It was in vain to remonstrate. We had not one shilling in our possession, and, for furniture, only our beds, chairs, table, and cooking utensils: all which, united, would not have paid half the debt.

"At least, sir," said my mistress, "you will not turn us into the streets, *to-night*?"

"Well!" said the fellow, reluctantly, "hardly *that*. But I'm up to these dodges, I promise you. Let you stay, and here you *will* stay. We'll stop that game. Without beds and window-sashes, you'll soon be ready to go. Collect the traps, Bill Bloxam, and look alive."

"It will soon be night, sir," said Zell, pale as a ghost: "a night that promises to be both cold and wet; in charity, leave us the protection of windows."

"Pin up your petticoat," returned the landlord, coolly. "*Here* she goes!"

He roughly tore at the window-sash. Out it came, crashing. But the rotten woodwork at the side, deprived of its support, and yielding as it seemed to some pressure from within, came away also. There was a heavy rushing fall that shook the very house—a rolling, ringing, spinning, settling down! From end to end, the apartment was literally carpeted with *gold*!

"Phsh!" said the reeling landlord, as he wiped the dust from his eyes.

My mistress was the first to recover composure. A watchman, on his way to night-duty, attracted by the crash, stood opposite. She bade me call him in, and, dismissing the now subdued landlord, procured a trusty guardian for the night. My mistress also despatched a special messenger in quest of Mr. Lemuel Samuelson, who, arriving with the dawn, joined us in further investigations.

Two thousand seven hundred guineas had been scattered on the floor. In different parts of the house, generally crammed into chinks and chasms of the decaying woodwork, were bank-notes to the amount of thirty-two thousand pounds. But even *that* was a trifle compared to the crafty old miser's foreign securities, which, disinterred in one lump, represented the immense sum of two hundred and ninety thousand pounds.

"And now, my love," said Mr. Samuelson, when both search and calculation were exhausted, "you will give Mrs. S. and me the pleasure of your company, at my little box at Sydenham, until you decide what *next* to do."

My mistress at once assented. Since the discovery of the treasure, she had had intervals of the deepest melancholy. Was she thinking what *might* have been, had the old man been less reticent? She had hardly addressed a word to me, and, until Mr. Samuelson came obsequiously to hand her to the carriage, I knew not if she would even bid me farewell. At last it was her guardian himself who drew her attention to me, by asking if she had any directions to give the "lad."

"The lad," repeated Zell, abstractedly.

"Call at my office, boy!" said Mr. Samuelson, who seemed impatient to get away. "By-the-by, what's your name?"

I made no answer. I was looking at my mistress.

"Sulky, eh?" said Mr. Samuelson. "Worse for *you*. Come, my love."

"Charley! Charley!" said Zell.

Then I *could* not answer. She waved her hand towards me, but her guardian led her away.

All that day, I sat at the window, as though I had fully expected her to return; but, in reality, I had no such idea. I knew that my darling mistress was gone—for ever, ever, gone—and had taken with her all joy, all happiness, all desire of life. I was conscious of a sense of hunger, but had no heart to look for food; at the time when we used to prepare our supper on those happy evenings, I crept to my lady's little bed, and lay down *there*. A curious rushing sound was in my ears, and my pulse seemed rather to give a continuous shudder, than to beat. Dreams came, without introductory ceremony of the sleep. I heard myself shouting and struggling. Then, darkness . . .

I awoke in my father's house. I had been there three weeks. Though very weak, I was in the path of recovery, and was soon in condition to return to school. But not to Glumper's. No.

I learned that, in my delirium, I had given a clue to my name and residence. What after-communications I made, I cannot say: I only know that both my mother, and my saucy little Agnes, were as familiar with the name of Zell as my own daily thoughts were. She was my love, my queen, my darling only mistress. In that faith, and in the firm assurance that I should one blessed day see her again, I grew to manhood.

There was a grand ball at Dublin Castle, at which I, a young lieutenant of dragoons, chanced to be present and abetting. The reception was more than usually crowded and magnificent, it being the farewell of a popular lord-lieutenant.

As the latter moved about among his smiling guests, he halted at a group beside me.

"Well, young gentlemen," said his excellency, "who is the successful knight? Surely this prize is not to escape us all! Resplendent beauty—sweetness—accomplishments—twelve thousand a year. Shame to Ireland, if this Mexican belle quits us to-night, her last in the land (for I hear she returns to Mexico), a disengaged woman!"

"She will *not*, my lord," replied Colonel Walsingham.

"Hah! Who wins?" asked his excellency, hardly less interested than if he had himself been a candidate.

"That is doubtful, still," put in young Lord Goring. "Hawkins, Rushton, O'Rourke, Walsingham, St. Buryans, my humble self, have all been 'mentioned' in the race. St. Buryans for choice."

"Why so?" asked his lordship.

"The lady has been seated this whole evening beside St. Buryans' lady-mother," said Goring, in a low voice. "And she's the cleverest woman, at a finish, in Christendom—or Jewry either."

"You said it would be decided to-night?"

"Thus. The young lady will dance but once, the last dance. We have all solicited the honour. She reserves her choice. It has been agreed to

accept the augury. Your lordship understands? The unsuccessful withdraw."

His excellency nodded, smiled, and passed on.

A few minutes later, a movement in the room drew my attention. All eyes seemed directed towards one object. Up the centre of the room, leaning on the arm of Lord John Loveless, now Earl St. Buryans, was passing my beautiful mistress! Taller—fuller, no whit lovelier, for that could not be. She looked full in my face. I thought she paused for a second. No, the superb brown eyes were languidly withdrawn, and, without recognition, she moved on.

The last dance was announced from the orchestra. As if under a spell, I placed myself opposite to my lady's chair, though remote from it. I saw the rival suitors, with well-bred self-possession, gather round, and each in turn prefer his claim. All were declined. St. Buryans—by whose haughty-looking mother my lady sat—alone remained. He approached her with confidence, his mother greeting him with a victorious smile. Before he could open his lips, Zell rose:

"Give me your arm, I wish to cross the room," she said to him haughtily.

She *did* cross. She came to *me*. Drawing her arm away from her conductor's, she held out both her little hands.

"Charley, Charley! Don't you know me? I come to ask you to—to dance with me—with your old friend, Zell."

We have more than one deer park—but it was from the Scotch one that, on Zell's reminder (she always pretends to be older and more thoughtful than I), I sent my friend Jack Rogers a haunch worthy of a king's acceptance.

V.

ANOTHER FAST LODGER RELATES

HIS OWN GHOST STORY.

The circumstances I am about to relate to you have truth to recommend them. They happened to myself, and my recollection of them is as vivid as if they had taken place only yesterday. Twenty years, however, have gone by since that night. During those twenty years I have told the story to but one other person. I tell it now with a reluctance which I find it difficult to overcome. All I entreat, meanwhile, is that you will abstain from forcing your own conclusions upon me. I want nothing explained away. I desire no arguments. My mind on this subject is quite made up, and, having the testimony of my own senses to rely upon, I prefer to abide by it.

Well! It was just twenty years ago, and within a day or two of the end of the grouse season. I had been out all day with my gun, and had had no sport to speak of. The wind was due east; the month, December; the place, a bleak wide moor in the far north of England. And I had lost my way. It was not a pleasant place in which to lose one's way, with the first feathery flakes of a coming snow-storm just fluttering down upon the

beather, and the leaden evening closing in all around. I shaded my eyes with my hand, and stared anxiously into the gathering darkness, where the purple moorland melted into a range of low hills, some ten or twelve miles distant. Not the faintest smoke-wreath, not the tiniest cultivated patch, or fence, or sheep-track, met my eyes in any direction. There was nothing for it but to walk on, and take my chance of finding what shelter I could, by the way. So I shouldered my gun again, and pushed wearily forward; for I had been on foot since an hour after daybreak, and had eaten nothing since breakfast.

Meanwhile, the snow began to come down with ominous steadiness, and the wind fell. After this, the cold became more intense, and the night came rapidly up. As for me, my prospects darkened with the darkening sky, and my heart grew heavy as I thought how my young wife was already watching for me through the window of our little inn parlour, and thought of all the suffering in store for her throughout this weary night. We had been married four months, and, having spent our autumn in the Highlands, were now lodging in a remote little village situated just on the verge of the great English moorlands. We were very much in love, and, of course, very happy. This morning, when we parted, she had implored me to return before dusk, and I had promised her that I would. What would I not have given to have kept my word!

Even now, weary as I was, I felt that with a supper, an hour's rest, and a guide, I might still get back to her before midnight, if only guide and shelter could be found.

And all this time, the snow fell and the night thickened. I stopped and shouted every now and then, but my shouts seemed only to make the silence deeper. Then a vague sense of uneasiness came upon me, and I began to remember stories of travellers who had walked on and on in the falling snow until, wearied out, they were fain to lie down and sleep their lives away. Would it be possible, I asked myself, to keep on thus through all the long dark night? Would there not come a time when my limbs must fail, and my resolution give way? When I, too, must sleep the sleep of death. Death! I shuddered. How hard to die just now, when life lay all so bright before me! How hard for my darling, whose whole loving heart—but that thought was not to be borne! To banish it, I shouted again, louder and longer, and then listened eagerly. Was my shout answered, or did I only fancy that I heard a far-off cry? I halloed again, and again the echo followed. Then a wavering speck of light came suddenly out of the dark, shifting, disappearing, growing momentarily nearer and brighter. Running towards it at full speed, I found myself, to my great joy, face to face with an old man and a lantern.

"Thank God!" was the exclamation that burst involuntarily from my lips.

Blinking and frowning, he lifted his lantern and peered into my face.

"What for?" growled he, sulkily.

"Well—for you. I began to fear I should be lost in the snow."

"Eh, then, folks do get cast away hereabouts fra' time to time, an' what's to hinder you from bein' cast away likewise, if the Lord's so minded?"

"If the Lord is so minded that you and I shall be lost together, friend, we must submit," I replied; "but I don't mean to be lost without you. How far am I now from Dwolding?"

"A gude twenty mile, more or less."

"And the nearest village?"

"The nearest village is Wyke, an' that's twelve mile t'other side."

"Where do you live, then?"

"Out yonder," said he, with a vague jerk of the lantern.

"You're going home, I presume?"

"Maybe I am."

"Then I'm going with you."

The old man shook his head, and rubbed his nose reflectively with the handle of the lantern.

"It ain't o' no use," growled he. "He 'ont let you in—not he."

"We'll see about that," I replied, briskly.

"Who is He?"

"The master."

"Who is the master?"

"That's the nowt to you," was the unceremonious reply.

"Well, well; you lead the way, and I'll engage that the master shall give me shelter and a supper to-night."

"Eh, you can try him!" muttered my reluctant guide; and, still shaking his head, he hobbled, gnome-like, away through the falling snow. A large mass loomed up presently out of the darkness, and a huge dog rushed out, barking furiously.

"Is this the house?" I asked.

"Ay, it's the house. Down, Bey!" And he fumbled in his pocket for the key.

I drew up close behind him, prepared to lose no chance of entrance, and saw in the little circle of light shed by the lantern that the door was heavily studded with iron nails, like the door of a prison. In another minute he had turned the key and I had pushed past him into the house.

Once inside, I looked round with curiosity, and found myself in a great raftered hall, which served, apparently, a variety of uses. One end was piled to the roof with corn, like a barn. The other was stord with flour-sacks, agricultural implements, casks, and all kinds of miscellaneous lumber; while from the beams overhead hung rows of hams, fitches, and bunches of dried herbs for winter use. In the centre of the floor stood some huge object gauntly dressed in a dingy wrapping-cloth, and reaching half way to the rafters. Lifting a corner of this cloth, I saw, to my surprise, a telescope of very considerable size, mounted on a rude moveable platform with four small wheels. The tube was made of painted wood, bound round with bands of metal rudely fashioned; the speculum, so far as I could

estimate its size in the dim light, measured at least fifteen inches in diameter. While I was yet examining the instrument, and asking myself whether it was not the work of some self-taught optician, a bell rang sharply.

"That's for you," said my guide, with a malicious grin. "Yonder's his room."

He pointed to a low black door at the opposite side of the hall. I crossed over, rapped somewhat loudly, and went in, without waiting for an invitation. A huge, white-haired old man rose from a table covered with books and papers, and confronted me sternly.

"Who are you?" said he. "How came you here? What do you want?"

"James Murray, barrister-at-law. On foot across the moor. Meat, drink, and sleep."

He bent his bushy brows into a portentous frown.

"Mine is not a house of entertainment," he said, haughtily. "Jacob, how dared you admit this stranger?"

"I didn't admit him," grumbled the old man. "He followed me over the muir, and shouldered his way in before me. I'm no match for six foot two."

"And pray, sir, by what right have you forced an entrance into my house?"

"The same by which I should have clung to your boat, if I were drowning. The right of self-preservation."

"Self-preservation?"

"There's an inch of snow on the ground already," I replied, briefly; "and it would be deep enough to cover my body before daybreak."

He strode to the window, pulled aside a heavy black curtain, and looked out.

"It is true," he said. "You can stay, if you choose, till morning. Jacob, serve the supper."

With this he waved me to a seat, resumed his own, and became at once absorbed in the studies from which I had disturbed him.

I placed my gun in a corner, drew a chair to the hearth, and examined my quarters at leisure. Smaller and less incongruous in its arrangements than the hall, this room contained, nevertheless, much to awaken my curiosity. The floor was carpetless. The whitewashed walls were in parts scrawled over with strange diagrams, and in others covered with shelves crowded with philosophical instruments, the uses of many of which were unknown to me. On one side of the fireplace, stood a bookcase filled with dingy folios; on the other, a small organ, fantastically decorated with painted carvings of mediæval saints and devils. Through the half-opened door of a cupboard at the further end of the room, I saw a long array of geological specimens, surgical preparations, crucibles, retorts, and jars of chemicals; while on the mantelshelf beside me, amid a number of small objects, stood a model of the solar system, a small galvanic battery, and a microscope. Every chair had its burden. Every corner was heaped high with books. The very floor was littered over with maps, casts, papers, tracings, and learned lumber of all conceivable kinds.

I stared about me with an amazement increased by every fresh object upon which my eyes chanced to rest. So strange a room I had never seen; yet seemed it stranger still, to find such a room in a lone farm-house amid those wild and solitary moors! Over and over again, I looked from my host to his surroundings, and from his surroundings back to my host, asking myself who and what he could be? His head was singularly fine; but it was more the head of a poet than of a philosopher. Broad in the temples, prominent over the eyes, and clothed with a rough profusion of perfectly white hair, it had all the ideality and much of the ruggedness that characterises the head of Louis von Beethoven. There were the same deep lines about the mouth, and the same stern furrows in the brow. There was the same concentration of expression. While I was yet observing him, the door opened, and Jacob brought in the supper. His master then closed his book, rose, and with more courtesy of manner than he had yet shown, invited me to the table.

A dish of ham and eggs, a loaf of brown bread, and a bottle of admirable sherry, were placed before me.

"I have but the homeliest farm-house fare to offer you, sir," said my entertainer. "Your appetite, I trust, will make up for the deficiencies of our larder."

I had already fallen upon the viands, and now protested, with the enthusiasm of a starving sportsman, that I had never eaten anything so delicious.

He bowed stiffly, and sat down to his own supper, which consisted, primitively, of a jug of milk and a basin of porridge. We ate in silence, and, when we had done, Jacob removed the tray. I then drew my chair back to the fireside. My host, somewhat to my surprise, did the same, and turning abruptly towards me, said:

"Sir, I have lived here in strict retirement for three-and-twenty years. During that time, I have not seen as many strange faces, and I have not read a single newspaper. You are the first stranger who has crossed my threshold for more than four years. Will you favour me with a few words of information respecting that outer world from which I have parted company so long?"

"Pray interrogate me," I replied. "I am heartily at your service."

He bent his head in acknowledgment; leaned forward, with his elbows resting on his knees and his chin supported in the palms of his hands; stared fixedly into the fire; and proceeded to question me.

His inquiries related chiefly to scientific matters, with the later progress of which, as applied to the practical purposes of life, he was almost wholly unacquainted. No student of science myself, I replied as well as my slight information permitted; but the task was far from easy, and I was much relieved when, passing from interrogation to discussion, he began pouring forth his own conclusions upon the facts which I had been attempting to place

before him. He talked, and I listened spell-bound. He talked till I believe he almost forgot my presence, and only thought aloud. I had never heard anything like it then; I have never heard anything like it since. Familiar with all systems of all philosophies, subtle in analysis, bold in generalisation, he poured forth his thoughts in an uninterrupted stream, and, still leaning forward in the same moody attitude with his eyes fixed upon the fire, wandered from topic to topic, from speculation to speculation, like an inspired dreamer. From practical science to mental philosophy; from electricity in the wire to electricity in the nerve; from Watts to Mesmer, from Mesmer to Reichenbach, from Reichenbach to Swedenborg, Spinoza, Condillac, Descartes, Berkeley, Aristotle, Plato, and the Magi and mystics of the East, were transitions which, however bewildering in their variety and scope, seemed easy and harmonious upon his lips as sequences in music. By-and-by—I forget now by what link of conjecture or illustration—he passed on to that field which lies beyond the boundary line of even conjectural philosophy, and reaches no man knows whither. He spoke of the soul and its aspirations; of the spirit and its powers; of second sight; of prophecy; of those phenomena which, under the names of ghosts, spectres, and supernatural appearances, have been denied by the sceptics and attested by the credulous, of all ages.

"The world," he said, "grows hourly more and more sceptical of all that lies beyond its own narrow radius; and our men of science foster the fatal tendency. They condemn as fable all that resists experiment. They reject as false all that cannot be brought to the test of the laboratory or the dissecting-room. Against what superstition have they waged so long and obstinate a war, as against the belief in apparitions? And yet what superstition has maintained its hold upon the minds of men so long and so firmly? Show me any fact in physics, in history, in archaeology, which is supported by testimony so wide and so various. Attested by all races of men, in all ages, and in all climates, by the soberest sages of antiquity, by the rudest savage of to-day, by the Christian, the Pagan, the Pantheist, the Materialist, this phenomenon is treated as a nursery tale by the philosophers of our century. Circumstantial evidence weighs with them as a feather in the balance. The comparison of causes with effects, however valuable in physical science, is put aside as worthless and unreliable. The evidence of competent witnesses, however conclusive in a court of justice, counts for nothing. He who pauses before he pronounces, is condemned as a trifler. He who believes, is a dreamer or a fool."

He spoke with bitterness, and, having said thus, relapsed for some minutes into silence. Presently he raised his head from his hands, and added, with an altered voice and manner,

"I, sir, paused, investigated, believed, and was not ashamed to state my convictions to the world. I, too, was branded as a visionary, held up to ridicule by my contemporaries, and hooted from that field of science in which I had laboured

with honour during all the best years of my life. These things happened just three-and-twenty years ago. Since then, I have lived as you see me living now, and the world has forgotten me, as I have forgotten the world. You have my history."

"It is a very sad one," I murmured, scarcely knowing what to answer.

"It is a very common one," he replied. "I have only suffered for the truth, as many a better and wiser man has suffered before me."

He rose, as if desirous of ending the conversation, and went over to the window.

"It has ceased snowing," he observed, as he dropped the curtain, and came back to the fire-side.

"Ceased!" I exclaimed, starting eagerly to my feet. "Oh, if it were only possible—but no! it is hopeless. Even if I could find my way across the moor, I could not walk twenty miles to-night."

"Walk twenty miles to-night!" repeated my host. "What are you thinking of?"

"Of my wife," I replied, impatiently. "Of my young wife, who does not know that I have lost my way, and who is at this moment breaking her heart with suspense and terror."

"Where is she?"

"At Dwolding, twenty miles away."

"At Dwolding," he echoed, thoughtfully. "Yes, the distance, it is true, is twenty miles; but—are you so very anxious to save the next six or eight hours?"

"So very, very anxious, that I would give ten guineas at this moment for a guide and a horse."

"Your wish can be gratified at a less costly rate," said he, smiling. "The night mail from the north, which changes horses at Dwolding, passes within five miles of this spot, and will be due at a certain cross-road in about an hour and a quarter. If Jacob were to go with you across the moor, and put you into the old coach-road, you could find your way, I suppose, to where it joins the new one?"

"Easily—gladly."

He smiled again, rang the bell, gave the old servant his directions, and, taking a bottle of whisky and a wine-glass from the cupboard in which he kept his chemicals, said:

"The snow lies deep, and it will be difficult walking to-night on the moor. A glass of usquebaugh before you start?"

I would have declined the spirit, but he pressed it on me, and I drank it. It went down my throat like liquid flame, and almost took my breath away.

"It is strong," he said; "but it will help to keep out the cold. And now you have no moments to spare. Good night!"

I thanked him for his hospitality, and would have shaken hands, but that he had turned away before I could finish my sentence. In another minute I had traversed the hall, Jacob had locked the outer door behind me, and we were out on the wide white moor.

Although the wind had fallen, it was still bitterly cold. Not a star glimmered in the black vault overhead. Not a sound, save the rapid crunching of the snow beneath our feet,

disturbed the heavy stillness of the night. Jacob, not too well pleased with his mission, shambled on before in sullen silence, his lantern in his hand, and his shadow at his feet. I followed, with my gun over my shoulder, as little inclined for conversation as himself. My thoughts were full of my late host. His voice yet rang in my ears. His eloquence yet held my imagination captive. I remember to this day, with surprise, how my over-excited brain retained whole sentences and parts of sentences, troops of brilliant images, and fragments of splendid reasoning, in the very words in which he had uttered them. Musing thus over what I had heard, and striving to reel a lost link here and there, I strode on at the heels of my guide, absorbed and unobservant. Presently—at the end, as it seemed to me, of only a few minutes—he came to a sudden halt, and said:

"Yon's your road. Keep the stone fence to your right hand, and you can't fail of the way."

"This, then, is the old coach-road?"

"Ay, 'tis the old coach-road."

"And how far do I go, before I reach the cross-roads?"

"Nigh upon three mile."

I pulled out my purse, and he became more communicative.

"The road's a fair road enough," said he, "for foot passengers; but 'twas over steep and narrow for the northern traffic. You'll mind where the parapet's broken away, close again the sign-post. It's never been mended since the accident."

"What accident?"

"Eh, the night mail pitched right over into the valley below—a gude fifty feet an' more—just at the worst bit o' road in the whole county."

"Horrible! Were many lives lost?"

"All. Four were found dead, and t'other two died next morning."

"How long is it since this happened?"

"Just nine year."

"Near the sign-post, you say? I will bear it in mind. Good night."

"Gude night, sir, and thankee." Jacob pocketed his half-crown, made a faint pretence of touching his hat, and trudged back by the way he had come.

I watched the light of his lantern till it quite disappeared, and then turned to pursue my way alone. This was no longer matter of the slightest difficulty, for, despite the dead darkness overhead, the line of stone fence showed distinctly enough against the pale gleam of the snow. How silent it seemed now, with only my footsteps to listen to; how silent and how solitary! A strange disagreeable sense of loneliness stole over me. I walked faster. I hummed a fragment of a tune. I cast up enormous sums in my head, and accumulated them at compound interest. I did my best, in short, to forget the startling speculations to which I had but just been listening, and, to some extent, I succeeded.

Meanwhile the night air seemed to become colder and colder, and though I walked fast I found it impossible to keep myself warm. My feet were like ice. I lost sensation in my

hands, and grasped my gun mechanically. I even breathed with difficulty, as though, instead of traversing a quiet north country highway, I were scaling the uppermost heights of some gigantic Alp. This last symptom became presently so distressing, that I was forced to stop for a few minutes, and lean against the stone fence. As I did so, I chanced to look back up the road, and there, to my infinite relief, I saw a distant point of light, like the gleam of an approaching lantern. I at first concluded that Jacob had retraced his steps and followed me; but even as the conjecture presented itself, a second light flashed into sight—a light evidently parallel with the first, and approaching at the same rate of motion. It needed no second thought to show me that these must be the carriage-lamps of some private vehicle, though it seemed strange that any private vehicle should take a road professedly disused and dangerous.

There could be no doubt, however, of the fact, for the lamps grew larger and brighter every moment, and I even fancied I could already see the dark outline of the carriage between them. It was coming up very fast, and quite noiselessly, the snow being nearly a foot deep under the wheels.

And now the body of the vehicle became distinctly visible behind the lamps. It looked strangely lofty. A sudden suspicion flashed upon me. Was it possible that I had passed the cross-roads in the dark without observing the sign-post, and could this be the very coach which I had come to meet?

No need to ask myself that question a second time, for here it came round the bend of the road, guard and driver, one outside passenger, and four steaming greys, all wrapped in a soft haze of light, through which the lamps blazed out, like a pair of fiery meteors.

I jumped forward, waved my hat, and shouted. The mail came down at full speed, and passed me. For a moment I feared that I had not been seen or heard, but it was only for a moment. The coachman pulled up; the guard, muffled to the eyes in capes and comforters, and apparently sound asleep in the rumble, neither answered my hail nor made the slightest effort to dismount; the outside passenger did not even turn his head. I opened the door for myself, and looked in. There were but three travellers inside, so I stepped in, shut the door, slipped into the vacant corner, and congratulated myself on my good fortune.

The atmosphere of the coach seemed, if possible, colder than that of the outer air, and was pervaded by a singularly damp and disagreeable smell. I looked round at my fellow-passengers. They were all three, men, and all silent. They did not seem to be asleep, but each leaned back in his corner of the vehicle, as if absorbed in his own reflections. I attempted to open a conversation.

"How intensely cold it is to-night," I said, addressing my opposite neighbour.

He lifted his head, looked at me, but made no reply.

"The winter," I added, "seems to have begun in earnest."

Although the corner in which he sat was so dim that I could distinguish none of his features very clearly, I saw that his eyes were still turned full upon me. And yet he answered never a word.

At any other time I should have felt, and perhaps expressed, some annoyance, but at the moment I felt too ill to do either. The icy coldness of the night air had struck a chill to my very marrow, and the strange smell inside the coach was affecting me with an intolerable nausea. I shivered from head to foot, and, turning to my left-hand neighbour, asked if he had any objection to an open window?

He neither spoke nor stirred.

I repeated the question somewhat more loudly, but with the same result. Then I lost patience, and let the sash down. As I did so, the leather strap broke in my hand, and I observed that the glass was covered with a thick coat of mildew, the accumulation, apparently, of years. My attention being thus drawn to the condition of the coach, I examined it more narrowly, and saw by the uncertain light of the outer lamps that it was in the last state of dilapidation. Every part of it was not only out of repair, but in a condition of decay. The sashes splintered at a touch. The leather fittings were crusted over with mould, and literally rotting from the woodwork. The floor was almost breaking away beneath my feet. The whole machine, in short, was foul with damp, and had evidently been dragged from some outhouse in which it had been mouldering away for years, to do another day or two of duty on the road.

I turned to the third passenger, whom I had not yet addressed, and hazarded one more remark.

"This coach," I said, "is in a deplorable condition. The regular mail, I suppose, is under repair?"

He moved his head slowly, and looked me in the face, without speaking a word. I shall never forget that look while I live. I turned cold at heart under it. I turn cold at heart even now when I recall it. His eyes glowed with a fiery unnatural lustre. His face was livid as the face of a corpse. His bloodless lips were drawn back as if in the agony of death, and showed the gleaming teeth between.

The words that I was about to utter died upon my lips, and a strange horror—a dreadful horror—came upon me. My sight had by this time become used to the gloom of the coach, and I could see with tolerable distinctness. I turned to my opposite neighbour. He, too, was looking at me, with the same startling pallor in his face, and the same stony glitter in his eyes. I passed my hand across my brow. I turned to the passenger on the seat beside my own, and saw—oh Heaven! how shall I describe what I saw? I saw that he was no living man—that none of them were living men, like myself! A pale phosphorescent light—the light of putrefaction—played upon their awful faces; upon their hair, dank with

the dews of the grave; upon their clothes, earth-stained and dropping to pieces; upon their hands, which were as the hands of corpses long buried. Only their eyes, their terrible eyes, were living; and those eyes were all turned menacingly upon me!

A shriek of terror, a wild unintelligible cry for help and mercy, burst from my lips as I flung myself against the door, and strove in vain to open it.

In that single instant, brief and vivid as a landscape beheld in the flash of summer lightning, I saw the moon shining down through a rift of stormy cloud—the ghastly sign-post rearing its warning finger by the wayside—the broken parapet—the plunging horses—the black gulf below. Then, the coach reeled like a ship at sea. Then, came a mighty crash—a sense of crushing pain—and then, darkness.

It seemed as if years had gone by when I awoke one morning from a deep sleep, and found my wife watching by my bedside. I will pass over the scene that ensued, and give you, in half a dozen words, the tale she told me with tears of thanksgiving. I had fallen over a precipice, close against the junction of the old coach-road and the new, and had only been saved from certain death by lighting upon a deep snowdrift that had accumulated at the foot of the rock beneath. In this snowdrift I was discovered at daybreak, by a couple of shepherds, who carried me to the nearest shelter, and brought a surgeon to my aid. The surgeon found me in a state of raving delirium, with a broken arm and a compound fracture of the skull. The letters in my pocket-book showed my name and address; my wife was summoned to nurse me; and, thanks to youth and a fine constitution, I came out of danger at last. The place of my fall, I need scarcely say, was precisely that at which a frightful accident had happened to the north mail nine years before.

I never told my wife the fearful events which I have just related to you. I told the surgeon who attended me; but he treated the whole adventure as a mere dream born of the fever in my brain. We discussed the question over and over again, until we found that we could discuss it with temper no longer, and then we dropped it. Others may form what conclusions they please—I *know* that twenty years ago I was the fourth inside passenger in that Phantom Coach.

VI.

ANOTHER FAST LODGER RELATES

CERTAIN PASSAGES TO HER HUSBAND.

[INTRODUCTORY NOTE BY MAJOR JACKMAN.

The country clergyman and his quiet and better than pretty wife, who occupied my respected friend's second floor for two spring months of four successive years, were objects of great interest, both with my respected friend and with me. One evening we took tea with them, and happened to speak of a pretty wilful-looking young creature and her husband—friends of theirs—who had dined with them on the previous day.

"Ah!" said the clergyman, taking his wife's hand very tenderly in his; "thereby hangs a tale. Tell it to our good friends, my dear." "I can address it, Owen," said his wife, hesitating, "to nobody but you." "Address it, then, to me, my darling," said he, "and Mrs. Lirriper and the Major will be none the worse listeners." So she went on as follows, with her hand resting in his all the time. Signed, J. JACKMAN.]

The first time I saw you again, after the years long and many which had passed over us since our childhood, I was watching for you on the peak of the hill, from whence I could see furthest down the steep and shady lane along which you were coming up to our hamlet from the plain below me. All day I had been anxious that when you arrived, our hills, which you must have forgotten, should put on their most gorgeous beauty; but now the sunset was come which would leave us the bare and grey outlines of the rocks only, and, from the knitting sky there fell bars of golden sunshine, with darker rays underlying them, slanting down the slopes of the mountain, and touching every rounded knoll and little dimpling dell with such a glory, that even the crimson and purple tints of the budding bilberry wires far away towards the level table-land where the summits blended, glowed, and burned under the farewell light. Just then there came a shout of welcome, like the shout of harvest-home, ringing up through the quiet air, and, straining my shaded eyes to catch the first glimpse, I saw you walking in the midst of a band of our sturdy, sunburnt villagers, with the same slight and delicate-looking frame, and pale, grave pleasant face, and shy and timid manner that were yours when we were boy and girl together.

Our little hamlet had gathered itself from time to time, without any special plan or purpose, upon one of the lower terraces of our cluster of mountains, separated from the nearest villages by a wide tract of land, only to be crossed by steep, stony, deep-rutted lanes, overhung with wild hedgerows, and almost impassable in the winter. During the summer, when the faint tones of the bells of our parish church were borne up to us on the calm air, a little procession of us, the girls and children riding on rough hill-ponies, were wont to wind down the lanes to the Sunday morning service; but in winter no one thought of the pilgrimage, unless some of the young men had sweethearts in the village whom they hoped to meet at church. Mr. Vernon, the rector, being an archdeacon, hardly less than a bishop in dignity and importance, was deeply distressed at the heathenish darkness of his mountain district; and he and my father, who owned the great hill-farm, which gave employment to the people of our hamlet, at last built the little red-brick church, with no tower, and smaller than our barn, which stands upon the point of the mountain terrace, overlooking the great plain that stretches away from our feet up to the very far horizon.

There might have been a difficulty in finding a curate who would live up at Rathlinghope,

with no other social intercourse than could be obtained by a long march into the peopled plain below us; but I knew afterwards that the church, so far as my father's share in it was concerned, had been built for you. You were just taking orders, and you had a pleasant remembrance of the large old rambling half-timber house where you had spent some months of your childhood; so when we wrote to you that your dwelling would be in our own house, your study being the blue parlour which looked down the green sheltered dell where the young lambs were folded, you answered that you would gladly take the charge, and live with us again on the sweet, free heathery uplands, where you had breathed in health and strength in your early boyhood.

You were grave and studious, and withal so simple-hearted, that the seclusion and the primitive manners of our hamlet made it a very Eden to you. You had never forgotten our old haunts, and we revisited them together, for in the first moment of our greeting you had fallen into your habit of dependence upon me, and of demanding my companionship, as when you were a delicate boy of six years, and I a strong, healthy, mountain girl three years older. To me only, could you utter your thoughts freely, for your natural shyness closed your lips to strangers; and all were strangers to you, even those who had known you for a lifetime, if they did not possess the touch of sympathy which your spirit needed before it would open its treasures. Up on the hill-side, when the steady noontide seemed as unchangeable as the everlasting rocks about us, or when the tremulous dusk stole with silent shadows over the fading headlands, you and I sat together, while I listened to the unreserved outpourings of your thoughts and fancies, boyish sometimes, for you were young still, but in my heart there was an ever-growing tenderness and care for you, which could find no flaw, and feel no weariness. You were apt to be unmindful of the hours, and it was I who made it my duty to watch their flight for you, and see to it that the prayer-bell, the single bell that hung under a little pent-roof against the church, should be tolled at the due time; for Mr. Vernon, in consideration of our heathenish condition, made it a point that the evening service should be read three times a week. And as it was needful that our household should set a pattern to the rest of the villagers, and it interfered with my father's evening pipe, and my mother could not be troubled to change her afternoon cap for her church bonnet, it always fell to my lot to walk with you—do you remember?—only a few hundred yards or so along the brow of the hill, to the little church.

I was about to say that it was the happiest time of my life; but all true life is gain; and the sorrows that befall us are none other than solemn massive foundation-stones laid low in unfathomable gloom, that a measureless content may be built upon them. You remember the first burial-service you had to read, when you besought me to stand beside you at the open grave, because never before had the mournful words been uttered by your lips. It

was only the funeral of a little child, and the tiny grave, when the clods were heaped upon it, was no larger than a molehill in the meadows; yet your voice faltered, and your hands trembled as you cast this first small seed into that God's Acre of ours. The autumn night set in while we lingered in silence beside the nameless coffin, long after the mother and her companion who had brought it to its solitary grave, had turned away homeward. It was the flapping of wings close beside us that caused us to lift up our eyes, and from the fir-trees above us four rooks flew home across the darkening sky to their nests in the plain below. You know how of old the flight of birds would fill me with vague superstitions, and just then the heavy fluttering of their dusky wings overhead, as they beat the air for their start, caused a sudden tremor and shudder to thrill through me.

"What ails you, Jane?" you asked.

"Nothing ails me, Mr. Scott," I said.

"Call me Owen," you answered, laying your hand upon my arm, and looking straight into my eyes, for we were of the same height, and stood level with one another: "I do not like to hear you call me anything but Owen. Have you forgotten how we used to play together? Do you remember how I fell into the sheep-pool when we were alone in the valley, and you wasted no time in fruitless cries, but waded in at once, and dragged me out of the water? You would carry me home in your strong arms, though the path was along the hill-side, and you had to rest every few minutes; while I looked up into your rosy face with a very peaceful feeling. Your face is not rosy now, Jane."

How could it be, while your words brought such a dull heavy pain to my heart? I seemed suddenly to be so many, many years older than you! Sometimes of late I had detected myself reckoning your age and mine by the month, and the day of the month, and always finding, with a pang faint and slight, that you were indeed so many years younger than I. Yet the heart takes little heed of age. And I, for the quiet life I had led among the mountains, just one regular single round of summer and winter, coming stealthily and uncounted in their turn from season to season, might have been little more than some yearling creature, that has seen but one spring-time and felt the frosts of but one Christmas. While you, with your great acquirements of learning, and the weighty thoughts that had already wrinkled your broad forehead, and the burden of study that had bowed down your young shoulders, seemed to have borne the full yoke of the years which had laid so gentle a touch upon me.

"I remember very well, Owen," I said; "I was proud of having you to take charge of. But you must go in now; the fog is rising, and you are not over strong."

I spoke with the old tone of authority, and you left me, standing alone beside the little rave. The churchyard extended to the very edge of the steep hill, which looked far and wide over the great plain. It was hidden now

by a white lake of mist floating beneath me, upon which the hunting-moon, rising slowly behind the eastern hills, shone down with cold pale beams; for the harvest was over, and the heavy October fogs gathered in the valleys, and hung in light clouds about the fading coppices in the hollows of the mountains. I turned heart-sick to the little open grave, the first in the new graveyard, which was waiting until the sheep were herded for the sexton to fill it up for ever with the clods; the baby hands and feet folded there in eternal rest, had never been stained with selfishness, and the baby lips, sealed in eternal silence, had uttered never a word of bitterness. So, I said, looking down sadly into the narrow tiny grave, so shall it be with my love; I bury it here while it is yet pure and unselfish, like a seed sown in God's Acre; and from it shall spring a plentiful harvest of happiness for Owen, and of great peace for myself.

It may be that the autumn fog was more harmful than usual, for I was ill after that night with my first serious illness; not merely ailing, but hanging doubtfully between life and death. I grew to think of our summer months together as of a time long since passed, and almost enwrapped in forgetfulness. My mother laughed when I stroked her grey hair with my feeble fingers, and told her I felt older than she was.

"Nay," she said, "we must have you younger and bonnier than ever, Jane. We must see what we can do for you before you come down stairs, and meet Owen. Poor Owen! Who would have dreamt that he could be more heart-broken and disconsolate than Jane's own mother? Poor Owen!"

My mother was smiling significantly, and looking keenly at me over her glasses, but I said nothing; only turned away my face from her scrutiny to the frosted window, where winter had traced its delicate patterns upon the lattice-panes.

"Jane," she went on, clasping my fingers in hers, "don't you know that we all wish it, Owen's father, and yours, and me? We thought of it before he came here. Owen is poor, but we have enough for both of you, and I love him like my own son. You need never leave the old home. Jane, don't you love Owen?"

"But I am older than he is," I whispered.

"A marvellous difference," she said, with another laugh; "so am I older than father, but who could tell it was so now? And what does it matter if Owen loves you?"

I wish to cast no blame on you, but there was much in your conduct to feed the sweet delusion which brought fresh health and strength to me. You called my mother, "Mother." You sent fond messages by her, which lost nothing in tone or glance by her delighted repetition of them. You considered no walk too far to get flowers for me from the gardens in the plain below. When I grew well enough to come down stairs you received me with a rapture of congratulation. You urged that the blue parlour, with its southern aspect and closely-fitting wainscot, was the warmest room in the house,

and you would not be satisfied until the great chintz-covered sofa with its soft cushions was lifted out of its corner, and planted upon the hearth, for me to lie there, watching you while you were busy among your books; and many times a day you read some sentence aloud, or brought a volume to my side that I might look over the same page, while you waited patiently as my slower eyes and brain were longer than yours in taking in the sense. Even when you were away at the rectory—for during my illness you had begun to spend your evenings there, when you had no church duty—I sat in your study, with your books about me, in which there were passages marked out for me to read. I lingered over getting well.

I was lying on the sofa one evening, wrapped in my mother's white shawl, and just passing into a dreamy slumber, when I heard you entering from one of your visits to the rectory. I cannot tell why I did not rouse myself, unless it seemed to me only as part of a dream, but you crossed the floor noiselessly, and stood beside me for a minute or two, looking down—I felt it—upon my changed face, and closed eyelids. Had I been asleep I should never have felt the light, timid, fluttering touch of your lips upon mine. But my eyes opened at once, and you fell back.

"What is it, Owen?" I asked you calmly, for I felt as if by instinct that the caress was not for me. "Why did you kiss me, Owen?"

"I wonder I never did it before," you said, "you are so like a sister to me. I have no other sister, Jane, and my mother died when I was very young."

You stood opposite to me in the bright fire-light with a face changing and flushing like a girl's, and a happy youthful buoyant gladness in it very different to your usually quiet aspect. As I looked at you the old pain returned like a forgotten burden upon my heart.

"I am so happy," you said, crossing over the hearth again, and kneeling down beside me.

"Is it anything you can tell me, dear Owen?" I said, laying my hand upon your hair, and wondering even then at the whiteness and thinness of my poor fingers. The door behind you was opened quietly, but you did not hear it, and my mother stood for an instant in the doorway smiling on us both; I felt keenly how she would misunderstand.

Then you spoke to me, shyly at first, but gathering confidence, of Adelaide Vernon. I knew her well: a little lovely graceful creature, with coquettish school-girl ways, which displayed themselves even at church, though her black browed and swarthy aunt sat beside her in the rector's pew. While you spoke, growing eloquent with a lover's rhapsodies, the fair young face, with its pink and white tints, and soft dainty beauty, rose up before me; and your praises seemed to flood my aching heart like a wide breaking in of water, which rolled desolately against me.

I need not remind you of the opposition your love met. Mr. Vernon was averse to marrying

his portionless niece to his poor curate of Ratlinghope; but his disapproval was nothing to the vehement rage with which Mrs. Vernon, who had other views for Adelaide, set her face against it. The rector came up to our house, and told us—you remember?—with tears wrung from him, proud and reticent man as he was, that he dreaded nothing less than a return of that fearful malady of madness, which had kept his wife a prisoner for years under his own roof. There was as bitter, but a more concealed resentment in our own household, which you only felt indirectly and vaguely. I learned now with what a long premeditated plan your father and mine had schemed for our marriage. Your poor foolish love seemed to every one but yourself and me a rash selfishness. Even I thought at times that half Adelaide's love for you sprang from pure contrariness and childish romance, just feeding upon the opposition it met with. How I smoothed your path for you; how, without suffering the coldness of disappointment to creep over me, I sought your happiness in your own way as if it had been mine also; you partly know. So we prevailed at last.

In spite of all my smothered pain, it was pleasant to see you watch the building of your little parsonage, the square red brick house beside the church, with the doors and windows pricked out with blue tessellated tile-work. It was not a stone's throw from our home, and the blue parlour saw little of your presence, and the dust gathered on the books you had been wont to read. But you would have me to share your exultation. Whenever the large beams were being fitted into your roof, or the cope-stones built into your walls, or the blue tiles set round your windows, I must look on with you, and hearken to your fears lest the home should be unworthy of Adelaide. All my sad thoughts—for day after day you were setting your foot upon my heart—I worked away in busy labour at your house, and in wistful contrivances to make the little nest look elegant and pretty in the sight of Adelaide Vernon.

Your marriage was to be on the Tuesday, and on the Monday I went down with you to the rectory. The place had become familiar to you, all but the long low southern wing, with its blank walls ivy-grown, and with its windows opening upon the other side over a wide shallow mere, fed with the waters of a hundred mountain brooks. They were Mrs. Vernon's apartments, built for her during her protracted and seemingly hopeless malady, for her husband had promised her that she should never be removed from under his roof. She kept them under her own charge, rarely suffering any foot to enter them, and Mr. Vernon drew me aside when we reached the house, and implored me to venture upon making my way, if possible, to his wife, who had shut herself up in them since the previous evening, and had refused to admit even him. I crossed the long narrow passage which separated them from the rest of the dwelling, and rapped gently at the door, and after a minute's silence I heard Mrs. Vernon's voice asking, "Who is there?"

"Only Jane Meadows," I answered.

I was a favourite with her, and after a slight hesitation, the door was opened, and Mrs. Vernon stood before me: her tall and powerful figure wrapped in a dressing-gown, which left the sinewy arms bare to the elbow, while the thick locks of her black hair, just streaked with grey, fell dishevelled about her swarthy face. The room behind her was littered from end to end, and the fire at which she had been sitting was choked up with cinders, while the window, tarnished with dust, gave no glimpse of the mountain landscape beyond. She returned to her chair before the fire, and surveyed me with a sullen frown from under her reddened eyelids. The trembling of her limbs, muscular as they were, and the glistening of her face, told me not more surely than the faint and sickly odour pervading the room, that she had been taking opium.

"Jane," she cried, with a burst of maudlin tears, which she did not attempt to conceal, "come here, and sit down beside me. I am so miserable, Jane. Your mother was here on Saturday, telling me that you love Owen Scott, and everybody wanted him to marry you. Adelaide, the poor little painted doll, is not fit to be his wife, and she will make him wretched. And you will be miserable, like all of us."

My heart sank at the thought of your wretchedness. "I am not miserable," I replied, throwing my own arms round her, and looking up into her wrathful eyes. "You don't know how strong and peaceful we grow when we seek the happiness of those we love. We cannot decide who shall love whom, and it was not God's will that Owen should choose me. Let us make them as happy as we can."

She let me lead her to her scat, and talk to her about you and Adelaide in a way that tranquillised her, until she consented to dress herself with my aid, and return with me to the company assembled in the other part of the house.

But there was something in Adelaide's whole conduct which tended to irritate Mrs. Vernon. She was playing silly pranks upon us all, but especially upon her gloomy aunt, about whom she hovered with a fretting waywardness mingled with an unquiet tenderness, which displayed itself in numberless childish ways; but with such grace and prettiness, that none of us could find it in our hearts to chide her, except Mrs. Vernon herself. I was glad when the time came for us to leave; though you loitered across the lawn, looking back every minute at Adelaide, who stood in the portico: her white dress gleaming amid the shadows, and she kissing her little hand to you with a laugh whose faint musical ringing just reached our ears.

You slept that night, as we often sleep, unwitting that those who are dear to us as our own souls are passing through great perils. You slept, and it was I who watched all night, and called you early in the morning, with the news that the sun was rising over the hills into a cloudless sky, and that your marriage-day was come.

We were at the rectory betimes, yet the villagers had reared an arch of flowers over the gates. Mrs. Vernon, dressed with unusual richness and care, was watching for us at the portico, and received us both with a grave but kindly greeting. All the house was astir with the hurrying of many feet, and the sharp click of doors slamming to and fro, but though you waited restlessly, no one else came near us in the little room where we three sat together, until the door was slowly opened—you turning to it with rapturous impatience—and Mr. Vernon entered and told us that Adelaide was nowhere to be found.

"Don't alarm yourself," said Mr. Vernon to his wife, "but Adelaide has been missing since daybreak; she was gone when her companions went to call her. You remember she used to walk in her sleep if she were much excited; and this morning the hall door was open, and her bonnet was found on the way to Ratlinghope. The agitation of yesterday must have caused this."

"She was coming to me!" you said, with a vivid smile and a glow, which faded as you began to realise the fact of Adelaide's disappearance.

The hills stretched away for many a mile, with shelving rocks here and there, which hung over deep still tarns, black with shadows, and hedged in by reedy thickets. And there were narrow rifts cleaving far down into the living stone of the mountain range, and overgrown with brambles where the shepherds sometimes heard their lambs bleating piteously, out of sight or reach of help, until the dreary moan died away from the careless echoes. "Children have been lost there," cried Mrs. Vernon, wringing her hands distractedly; and if Adelaide had wandered away in the darkness, she might be lying now dead in the depths of the black tarns, or imprisoned alive in one of the clefts of the rocks.

I never left your side that day; and as hour after hour passed by, I saw a grey ghastly change creep over your young face, as your heart died within you. Mrs. Vernon kept close beside us, though we soon distanced every other seeker, and her wonderful strength continued unabated, even when your despairing energy was exhausted. I knew the mountains as well as the shepherds did; and from one black unruffled tarn, to another like itself, gloomy and secret-looking, I led you without speaking; save that into every gorge, whose depth our straining eyes could not penetrate, we called aloud, until the dark walls of the gulf muttered back the name of Adelaide. There was no foot-weariness for us as long as the daylight lasted; and it seemed as if the sun *could* not go down until we had found her. Now and then we tarried upon the brow of some headland, with our hands lifted to our ears that we might catch the most distant whisper of the signal-bells; the faintest tone that ever reached the uplands, if there were any to be borne to us upon the breeze, from the church belfry in the plain far away.

The search was continued for many days; but

no trace of Adelaide was found, except a lace cap which lay soiled and wet with dew near to one of the tarns which we three had visited; but without discovering it then. Mrs. Vernon rallied our hopes and energies long after all reasonable ground for either was lost, and then she fell into a depression of spirits which almost threatened a renewal of her early malady. She collected all Adelaide's little possessions, and spent many hours of each day among them in her own apartments; but she was always ready to leave them, when you, in your sore grief, wandered to the old home of the lost girl; and then she strove to console you with a patient tenderness strange to see in a woman so rigid and haughty. But you refused to be comforted; and putting on one side all the duties of your office, you roamed ceaselessly about the hills; dragging yourself back again almost lifeless to our house—for your own you would never enter—and asking me night after night, as the sunset and darkness spread upon the mountains, if there were no place left unexplored. As though it were possible to call back again the dead past, and find her yet alive among the desolate hills!

In the midst of it all another trouble befel us. Before the new year came in, my mother fell ill of the sickness in which she died. I think that first roused you from the solitude of your despair. Though you could not yet front the kindly familiar faces of your old congregation, there seemed to be some little break in the cloud of hopelessness which hung about you, in the care you began to feel for her. It was but a few days before she died, and after you had been reading to her, as she lay very feeble, and often dozing away with weakness, that she suddenly roused herself, and looked at you with eager eyes.

"You'll always be fond of Jane, Owen?"

"Always. She has been the truest of sisters to me."

"Ah!" sighed my mother, "you little think how she has loved you. Not one woman in a thousand could have done as our Jane has. Boy, it's not possible you'll ever be loved so again on earth."

You had never thought of it before, and your face grew paler than my mother's. I sat behind the curtains, where you could see me though she could not; and you looked across at me fixedly, still keeping your station by her side. I smiled with the tears standing in my eyes, but with no foolish burning in my cheeks, for if it would comfort you in any degree, I was neither afraid nor ashamed that you should know it.

"Ever since you came," my mother murmured, "smoothing every stone out of your path, and only fretting because she could not bear every trouble for you! If you ever marry, Owen, she will live only for you, and your wife and children. You will always care for her, Owen?"

"I will never marry any other woman," you said, laying your lips upon my mother's wrinkled hand.

I know it was a comfort to you. Perhaps in the suddenness and mystery of your loss, you felt as if everything was wrecked, and nothing remained to life but a bleak, black dreariness.

But from that hour, there was a light, very feeble and dim and lustreless—a mere glow-worm in the waste wilderness—which shone upon your path. You began to return to your old duties, though it was as if you were leaning upon me, and trusting to my guiding. There was no talk of love between us; it was enough that we understood one another.

We might have gone on quietly thus, year after year, until the memory of Adelaide had faded away, but that it was not many months before my father, who had been younger than my mother, and was a fine man yet, announced to me that he was about to marry again. The news had reached you elsewhere; for, on the same evening, while I was sitting alone with my troubled thoughts, you called me into the blue parlour, and made me take my old seat in the corner of the chintz-covered sofa, while you knelt down beside me.

"Jane," you said, very gently, "I want to offer my poor home to you."

"No, no, Owen," I cried, looking down upon your face, so grey and unsmiling, with dark circles under your sunken eyes, "you are young yet, and will meet with some other woman—a dear sister she shall ever be to me—younger and brighter, and more fitted for you than I am. You shall not sacrifice yourself to me."

"But, Jane," you urged, and a pleasant light dawned in your eyes, "I cannot do without you. You know I could not go alone into yonder little house, which stands empty by the church; and how could I go away from Ratlinghope, leaving you behind me? I have no home but where you are; and I love you more than I ever thought to love any woman again."

Maybe you remember what more you said; every word is in my heart to this day.

I thought it over in the quiet night. You were poor, and I, inheriting my mother's fortune, could surround you with comforts; secretly in my judgment, there had grown the conviction that you would never be what the world calls a prosperous man. The time was come when we must be separated or united for ever; and if you parted from me, I could never more stand between you and any sorrow. So I became your wife nearly twelve months after your great loss and misery.

Those first weeks of our marriage had more sunshine than I had ever dared to hope for. You seemed to shake off a great burden, now that it was irrevocably settled that our lives were to be passed together. Not a single lurking dread remained in my heart that you were otherwise than happy.

We came back to England some days earlier than we intended, for a letter reached me after many delays, with the news that Mrs. Vernon was ill, and implored us to hasten our return. We stayed on our way homeward at the rectory, where I soon left you with Mr. Vernon, while I was conducted to the entrance of the long passage which led to Mrs. Vernon's apartments. Her lady, the servant said in a whisper, was ailing more in mind than in body, and she

dared not disobey her strict orders not to venture further. I went on, for I knew her caprices; and once again I was admitted, when she heard me say, calling myself by your name, that it was Jane Scott who sought entrance. There was no new gleam of madness in her dark eyes. She grasped my hands nervously, and held them fast, while she questioned me about our journey, and what your manner had been. Were you happy? Had you altogether ceased to grieve for Adelaide? Was your whole love mine? Was there perfect unalloyed content in our mutual affection?

"Jane," she said, with her lips close to my ear, though she spoke in a loud shrill tone, "I had sworn that Adelaide should never marry Owen Scott. Partly for your sake, for your mother said it was killing you. Partly because it was better for her to marry my rich nephew. Jane, I must have what I set my mind upon, or I should die. What was Adelaide, that I should lose my life, or worse, ten times worse, lose my reason again for her sake? I did it for the best, Jane. I never thought how it was to end. It only seemed to me, if I could hide her from one day till the next, something would happen. But it was a long long time, a dreadful time, till Owen came to tell us he was going to marry you. You understand, Jane?"

"No, no!" I cried.

"It seemed so easy a thing to do, and best for all of us. I carried her here in the night, like the baby she is. I have never been cruel to her, never, Jane. But the time seemed long, long, and she was wild and cunning at first. I only thought of a little while, and afterwards I grew afraid. But she will not come out now, though I try to rouse her. Go in, Jane, and make her come out!"

Mrs. Vernon drew me across the inner apartment to the door of a small chamber, padded throughout, and with no opening except into the ante-room. It had been constructed for herself in the seasons of her most dangerous paroxysms, and was so carefully planned that no sound of her wild ravings could be heard, and no glimpse of her face could be seen, through the window which overlooked the mere. And here lay your Adelaide asleep, wan and emaciated, with a dimness on her golden curls, and all the rosy tints of her beauty faded.

"She has been taking laudanum," said Mrs. Vernon. "I gave it to her at first, when I was compelled to be away for a long time, and now she has a craving for it. I have never been cruel to her, Jane. She has had everything she wanted."

You know how I came down to the library, where you and Mr. Vernon were sitting, and told you and Mr. Vernon all. You know how, while Mr. Vernon bowed his grey head upon his hands, you stretched out your arms to me, and cried, with an exceeding bitter cry as if I could find a remedy for you, "Help me, Jane!"

Dear, my heart fluttered towards you for a moment, longing to be clasped in your outstretched arms, and pour out all my love to you, which had ever been tongue-tied, lest you should

weary of it; but I hardened myself against the yearning. In the great mirror on the staircase I scarcely knew the white-faced despairing woman, who was sweeping by, erect and stern, and the two men with downcast heads and lingering footsteps who were following her. You spoke no word, either of you, but passed through the outer apartment, with its tarnished window and sullied disorder, where Mrs. Vernon sat cowering in the furthest corner, and entered the room within, where Adelaide lay asleep, but breathing fitfully, as on the verge of waking. I dragged myself (for I was faint) to the easement, which I pushed open, and looked out upon the purple hills, purple with heather-bells, where we had thought her unknown tomb was. Up yonder stood our home, the home we had built for Adelaide, and which we had never yet entered; and turning away my aching eyes from it, I looked back again upon you, who were standing beside her, with a depth of tender and horror-stricken pity on your bending face.

Whether it was the fresh air from the hills, or some mysterious influence of your presence penetrating her sleeping senses, we cannot tell; but while I looked, unable to turn away my eyes from you both, her mouth quivered, and her long eyelashes trembled, half opening and closing again, as if too languid to bear the light, until you touched her hands softly and timidly, and breathed "Adelaide!" And she awoke fully, with a sharp shrill cry, as if you were at last come for her deliverance, and springing into your arms, she clung to you, with her little hands clasped round you as though they would never unclasp again; while you laid your cheek down upon her dim dishevelled curls, and I heard you murmur, "My darling!" Yet yonder was our home, yours and mine, Owen; and the ring that was on my finger—the only one I wore, I cared so much for it—was our marriage-ring.

You turned to me, Owen, with that full, searching gaze, eye to eye, and soul to soul, which we could bear from no other. Adelaide was come back from the dead to bring to us greater sorrow than her death had brought. We saw it all, you and I, while she was still clinging to you with sobs and childish caresses, and I stood aloof at the window. I knew how much you had to say to her which no other ear might listen to. I knew what it would be wisest and best to do. I took Mr. Vernon's arm, and I drew him away from the room, and I left you and Adelaide together.

I know now that it was not long before you came to me—only ten minutes—such a trifle of time as one gives ungrudgingly to the dreariest beggar on the roadside who has a piteous tale to tell. But all the past, and all the dreaded future being present with me, the moments seemed endless in their immortal bitterness, until you entered the room where I had shut myself in alone, and coming swiftly up to me where I stood upon the hearth, hid your face upon my shoulder with strong sobs and tears.

"I will go away, Jane," you said at last, "by myself for a few days, till she is gone from here."

You will take care of her for me. She knows all now."

"I will do anything for you," I answered, still chary of my words, as it was my wont to be, lest my love should weary you.

You left me, as it was best you should do, alone, with the charge of that perplexed household upon me; Adelaide broken in health and spirits; Mrs. Vernon plunged into the frenzy of her old malady; the story running far and wide throughout the country. Every day I found my comfort and strength in the letter that came from you, wherein you had the generosity to lay bare your heart to me as frankly as ever. So the hard task began to grow lighter; the tangled coil to unravel itself. Mr. Vernon procured a nurse to take care of his wife, and I accompanied Adelaide to the distant dwelling of some friends, where we hoped she might sooner recover her health; nor did I leave her until I saw her resuming her playful girlish ways, and coquetish graces. At last I was free to go home; to go to the home you and I had built on the rock, watching together its beams laid, and its roof raised. But I was alone there. If Adelaide had been your young and beautiful wife, you would have crossed the threshold hand in hand, uttering such words of welcome as would never have died out of her memory, if it had been like mine.

The jealous misgiving was unworthy of you and myself, dear. I paced the little rooms, taking up the trinkets which you had brought anxiously and lavishly for Adelaide, and always laying them down again with a sharper pang. Did you wish me to die, Owen? Was your heart aching to take her back again? I rested at last in your little study, where your books lay in scattered heaps before the empty shelves. The days were gone for ever when we had read them together on the hill-side in the first careless freedom of your sojourn with us. I sat down among them, covering my face with my hands, and I heard and I saw nothing.

Nothing, my love, my dear, until your hand rested on my head, and your voice, in hearty cheery tones, fell on my delighted ear.

"Jane," you said, "my darling, my wife! We are come home at last. I meant to be here first, but it is ever you who welcome me. The trouble is past. I love you better, love you more, than ever I loved Adelaide."

You lifted up my head, and made me look into your face. It was at once peaceful and exultant, as the face of a man who has gone through a great conflict, and come out of it more than conqueror. You laid your lips to mine with one long kiss, which told me infinitely better than words could tell, that never more need shadow of doubt or distrust of your love fall upon my spirit. Such as I was, you gathered me into your inmost heart, barring it against any memory or any fancy that might betray me. The deep foundations had been laid, and any storm that beat against our confidence and content would beat against them all in vain.

Love, we have learned to speak of the past calmly, and Adelaide has been to see us with her husband.

VII.

MRS. LIRRIPER RELATES HOW JEMMY TOPPED UP.

Well my dear and so the evening readings of these jottings of the Major's brought us round at last to the evening when we were all packed and going away next day, and I do assure you that by that time though it was deliciously comfortable to look forward to the dear old house in Norfolk-street again, I had formed quite a high opinion of the French nation and had noticed them to be much more homely and domestic in their families and far more simple and amiable in their lives than I had ever been led to expect, and it did strike me between ourselves that in one particular they might be imitated to advantage by another nation which I will not mention, and that is in the courage with which they take their little enjoyments on little means and with little things and don't let solemn big-wigs stare them out of countenance or speechify them dull, of which said solemn big-wigs I have ever had the one opinion that I wish they were all made comfortable separately in coppers with the lids on and never let out any more.

"Now young man," I says to Jemmy when we brought our chairs into the balcony that last evening, "you please to remember who was to 'top up.'"

"All right Gran" says Jemmy. "I am the illustrious personage."

But he looked so serious after he had made me that light answer, that the Major raised his eyebrows at me and I raised mine at the Major.

"Gran and Godfather," says Jemmy, "you can hardly think how much my mind has run on Mr. Edson's death."

It gave me a little check. "Ah! It was a sad scene my love" I says, "and sad remembrances come back stronger than merry. But this" I says after a little silence, to rouse myself and the Major and Jemmy all together, "is not topping up. Tell us your story my dear."

"I will," says Jemmy.

"What is the date sir?" says I. "Once upon a time when pigs drank wine?"

"No Gran," says Jemmy, still serious; "once upon a time when the French drank wine."

Again I glanced at the Major, and the Major glanced at me.

"In short, Gran and Godfather," says Jemmy, looking up, "the date is this time, and I'm going to tell you Mr. Edson's story."

The flutter that it threw me into. The change of colour on the part of the Major!

"That is to say, you understand," our bright-eyed boy says, "I am going to give you my version of it. I shall not ask whether it's right or not, firstly because you said you knew very little about it, Gran, and secondly because what little you did know was a secret."

I folded my hands in my lap and I never took my eyes off Jemmy as he went running on.

"The unfortunate gentleman" Jemmy com-

menges, "who is the subject of our present narrative was the son of Somebody, and was born Somewhere, and chose a profession Somehow. It is not with those parts of his career that we have to deal; but with his early attachment to a young and beautiful lady."

I thought I should have dropped. I durstn't look at the Major; but I knew what his state was, without looking at him.

"The father of our ill-starred hero" says Jimmy, copying as it seemed to me the style of some of his story-books, "was a worldly man who entertained ambitious views for his only son and who firmly set his face against the contemplated alliance with a virtuous but penniless orphan. Indeed he went so far as roundly to assure our hero that unless he weaned his thoughts from the object of his devoted affection, he would disinherit him. At the same time, he proposed as a suitable match, the daughter of a neighbouring gentleman of a good estate, who was neither ill favoured nor unamiable, and whose eligibility in a pecuniary point of view could not be disputed. But young Mr. Edson, true to the first and only love that had inflamed his breast, rejected all considerations of self-advancement, and, deprecating his father's anger in a respectful letter, ran away with her."

My dear I had begun to take a turn for the better, but when it came to running away I began to take another turn for the worse.

"The lovers" says Jimmy "fled to London and were united at the altar of Saint Clement's Danes. And it is at this period of their simple but touching story, that we find them inmates of the dwelling of a highly respected and beloved lady of the name of Gran, residing within a hundred miles of Norfolk-street."

I felt that we were almost safe now, I felt that the dear boy had no suspicion of the bitter truth, and I looked at the Major for the first time and drew a long breath. The Major gave me a nod.

"Our hero's father" Jimmy goes on "proving implacable and carrying his threat into unrelenting execution, the struggles of the young couple in London were severe, and would have been far more so, but for their good angel's having conducted them to the abode of Mrs. Gran: who, divining their poverty (in spite of their endeavours to conceal it from her), by a thousand delicate arts smoothed their rough way, and alleviated the sharpness of their first distress."

Here Jimmy took one of my hands in one of his, and began a marking the turns of his story by making me give a beat from time to time upon his other hand.

"After a while, they left the house of Mrs. Gran, and pursued their fortunes through a variety of successes and failures elsewhere. But in all reverses, whether for good or evil, the words of Mr. Edson to the fair young partner of his life, were: 'Unchanging Love and Truth will carry us through all!'"

My hand trembled in the dear boy's, those words were so wofully unlike the fact.

"Unchanging Love and Truth" says Jimmy over again, as if he had a proud kind of a noble pleasure in it, "will carry us through all! Those were his words. And so they fought, their way, poor but gallant and happy, until Mrs. Edson gave birth to a child."

"A daughter," I says.

"No" says Jimmy, "a son. And the father was so proud of it that he could hardly bear it out of his sight. But a dark cloud overspread the scene. Mrs. Edson sickened, drooped, and died."

"Ah! Sickened, drooped, and died!" I says.

"And so Mr. Edson's only comfort, only hope on earth, and only stimulus to action, was his darling boy. As the child grew older, he grew so like his mother that he was her living picture. It used to make him wonder why his father cried when he kissed him. But unhappily he was like his mother in constitution as well as in face, and he died too before he had grown out of childhood. Then Mr. Edson, who had good abilities, in his forlornness and despair threw them all to the winds. He became apathetic, reckless, lost. Little by little he sank down, down, down, down, until at last he almost lived (I think) by gaming. And so sickness overtook him in the town of Sens in France, and he lay down to die. But now that he laid him down when all was done, and looked back upon the green Past beyond the time when he had covered it with ashes, he thought gratefully of the good Mrs. Gran long lost sight of, who had been so kind to him and his young wife in the early days of their marriage, and he left the little that he had as a last Legacy to her. And she, being brought to see him, at first no more knew him than she would know from seeing the ruin of a Greek or Roman Temple, what it used to be before it fell; but at length she remembered him. And then he told her with tears, of his regret for the misspent part of his life, and besought her to think as mildly as she could, because it was due poor fallen Angel of his unchanging Love and Constancy after all. And because she had her grandson with her, and he fancied that his own boy, if he had lived, might have grown to be something like him, he asked her to let him touch his forehead with his cheek and say certain parting words."

Jimmy's voice sank low when it got to that, and tears filled my eyes, and filled the Major's.

"You little Conjuror" I says, "how did you ever make it all out? Go in and write it every word down, for it's a wonder."

Which Jimmy did, and I have repeated it to you my dear from his writing.

Then the Major took my hand and kissed it, and said "Dearest madam all has prospered with us."

"Ah Major" I says drying my eyes, "we needn't have been afraid. We might have known it. Treachery don't come natural to beaming youth; but trust and pity, love and constancy—they do, thank God!"

THE END OF THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER FOR 1864.

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